Christian Courier

A REFORMED WEEKLY, *formerly known as* **Calvinist Contact**

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Poor of Latin America bring gospel to North American pilgrims

John Pater

EDMONTON — Their mid-winter holiday destination is not the sun-drenched beaches of the tropics, but the streets of cities and villages in Mexico, Nicaragua and Guatemala. An air-conditioned villa is not their home away from home; instead they stay in small, poorly ventilated places with cement floors and thatched roofs. Their cameras don't capture exotic scenery; instead, they take home pictures of those they meet — the poor — whose struggle has captured their hearts.

Gerald Debbink and Jenny and Clarence Visser, all from the Edmonton area, have made frequent trips to parts of Latin America in the last decade. This past February, Debbink made a return pilgrimage to Mexico; the Vissers journeyed to Nicaragua and Guatemala.

"Beautiful! Wonderful!" is *not* the response you'll get from them on their return.

"Poverty is depressing," says Jenny Visser. "You sure can't glorify poverty."

So why do they keep going back?

The Vissers went to Haiti in 1986, to Venezuela in 1987, to Nicaragua in 1989 and to Mexico in 1990. Debbink and his family lived for three years in Mexico. They also visited Cuba and Nicaragua. Since returning to Canada two years ago, Debbink has gone back to Mexico seven times.

The draw for all three of them is not to spend time in the "sun." Instead they're drawn to be with those who are part of "base Christian communities."

The poor understand

Base Christian communities are "churches" made up primarily of the poorest people in Latin America. They meet together regularly to read the Bible and apply it to their context.

"The Bible is full of the poor," says Jenny Visser, "and when you go to these countries you read the Bible differently."

Clarence Visser says the people in the base Christian communities "come up with interpretations that blow us away." "Between their Bible and the Holy Spirit," he says, "they understand the essence of what it means to be the people of God."

He says that's where the next

See **POVERTY** *p.2...*

Jenny and Clarence Visser: "Poor pilgrims" PHOTO: JOHN PATER

Boyhood memories

Last April Raymond Schraa of Edmonton spent some time in the Frisian polders where he used to roam when he was a boy. He took this picture of an oyster-catcher.
See p. 10 for more pictures and a poem.

Same sex couples may soon sign as 'domestic partners'

Commission still wrestling with health, pension benefits

CC staff

LONDON, Ont. — The head of a group of Christian lawyers says the outcry of Ontario Christians against legislation that could have muzzled pastors when preaching on homosexuality should not stop yet.

According to Janet Epp Buckingham, a director with the Christian Legal Fellowship, now is the time for Ontario Christians to protest a proposed change to the province's definition of marriage to include same sex couples. Buckingham is also warning residents of other provinces that what happens in Ontario will likely come close to home for them in another two or three years.

So far, Buckingham says she hasn't been disappointed in the response. "There's probably been more activity on Bill 45 and related bills than I've seen on any other issue, including the abortion bill [Bill C-43]," she says.

Flurry of bills

Bill 45 is a private member's bill introduced by a Liberal MPP a year ago that would add sexual orientation to the list of prohibited grounds for harassment. It also wants to drop the phrase "of the opposite sex" from the definition of a common law couple.

Bill 45 appeared around the same time as bills 55 and 56. Those bills would have allowed legal action against persons whose conduct or

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Nandy Heule

On the job.... Does being a Christian make a difference for your work? This column tries to explore that question by allowing readers to peek into the working lives of ordinary Canadians.

NAME: Mary Van Wijngaarden

AGE: fifty-something

COMPANY: Shalom Manor Home for the Aged/Nursing Home

LOCATION: Grimsby, Ontario

JOB: Health care aide

How did you get to be a health care aide?

In Holland, before I immigrated to Canada, I had always wanted to be a nurse. But at the time, the people around me discouraged me to get into nursing because they told me the pay was low and the weekend hours problematic. Besides, I already knew my future husband, a dairy farmer, so why bother? they said.

However, when my youngest child turned five and I was in my 40s, I wanted to do something off our family dairy farm. I dropped by Shalom Manor, hoping to apply for a kitchen job or something. Instead, the administrator encouraged me to apply for a health care aide job, as the home was looking for somewhat older workers like myself. I applied and got the job. After working for a while, I went to school part-time to get a health care aide certificate.

What is your typical work day like?

When I'm on day shifts, I start at 6:45 a.m. With the other staff on duty, I listen to reports about what happened to residents during the night. Then at 7:00 a.m. my work starts. Health care aides do all the basic person-to-person care: we wash and dress patients, serve meals, and help in every other way as needed.

The work is physically demanding. You have to be a strong person. I'm on my feet seven out of eight hours on the job.

Does your job help you live your faith?

Even when old, people are afraid of death. I sit with the residents and talk. I have seen so many people die. We as staff have to comfort our residents. For example, most residents here at Shalom know Psalm 23 by heart, in Dutch. So when I help a resident get ready for bed and I sense that she is anxious, I try to sing Psalm 23 with her or read a Bible passage. Sometimes taking those extra 10 minutes at bedtime can make all the difference later at night. I love my job.

What about making a living?

I think our wages are okay and we get benefits. I am satisfied. I don't just work for the money. But since I get a pension and still work with my son on our dairy farm, it's a bit hard for me to know, given a number of expenses like Christian high school tuition, if I could live off my salary alone. I am happy with what I make at Shalom Manor.

What do you like best about your job?

I love those old people. These are the (Dutch immigrant) people who built our churches and our Christian schools. They need the best of care.

Is there anything you dislike?

Some days are better than others, of course, but I've never really had a day when I felt "yuk" about work.

Any suggestions for career strategists?

There are few men working as health care aides. I wonder why. There are several ways to become a health care aide. Some first get a certificate at a community college and then start working; others start working as an aide and then go to school part-time to get certified, like I did. With recent government funding cutbacks, I don't think there are as many openings as when I started.

The opinions expressed in this column are those of the people interviewed and might not reflect average working conditions or career prospects.

Do you know a Christian worker (paid or volunteer) you admire and would like to see interviewed for this column? Or do you feel you are doing unusual work that might interest young people or unemployed persons? Call Nandy Heule at (905) 988-6174 or *Christian Courier* at (905) 682-8311.

Poverty remains in Latin America

...continued from p. 1

Reformation is going to come from. "Christianity has to come from people who have gone back to the Bible," says Visser, "and from a people who don't have the traditions and hang-ups we have."

The Vissers (Clarence is 66, Jenny is 69) also spent their time reconnecting with people and places they had seen before. There is Denis Hebert, a Roman Catholic priest who has been involved with base Christian communities for a long while. "He exudes peace and radiates God's love," say the Vissers.

There's Ed Carson, a teacher they had known in Edmonton who now works with street children in Managua, Nicaragua. "He keeps these kids alive," they say. The Vissers brought along 800 diabetic needles, clothes and sports equipment for these children.

The poverty remains

During their visit, a mentally handicapped boy, who had been missing for two months, was found wandering the streets. He was filthy but had somehow survived.

The Vissers visited Bluefields, a Nicaraguan community that had been devastated by a hurricane five years ago. Clarence had gone there then with Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC) crews to rebuild houses. The poverty had remained though.

"It's amazing how people can continue being poor," says Clarence. The Vissers met one family who had to choose between paying for an education for their children or a new house (a simple concrete shell). They chose for their children's future and remained in their ramshackle hut.

Gerald Debbink's return to the base Christian community in Cuernavaca, Mexico, ended up being a very politically charged time. He says the entire country is in an uproar over the violent uprising in Chiapas State at the beginning of this year (see CC story, Feb. 11, 1994).

He says the many poor people throughout the country identify strongly with the people of Chiapas and their demands for communal land reform and the correcting of electoral fraud. "The base Christian communities are ready to go," says Debbink. "They're ready to die for the cause."

At one point during Debbink's stay, 2,000 people came marching through the area he was staying. They were headed for Mexico City to confront the president. "Their shoes were falling apart," says Debbink, "and their clothes were in tatters."

Asked to videotape

The base Christian communities in the area brought food and clothing for the marchers. But army trucks also came to bring the people back to their homes. In fear of any confrontation that might follow, the marchers asked Debbink, as a foreigner, to videotape a public rally. Debbink did so, and the marchers continued on their way.

"Christ reincarnated," is how the Vissers sum up the many pictures and memories they have of a trip such as this one. "We didn't *hear* the Word of God," says Jenny, "we *experienced* it."

Debbink says that of all the times he's been to Latin America and then returned here, this is the hardest time he's had re-adjusting to life here. People are fighting for their lives over there, he says. "What am I going to do here?"

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Whither South Africa?

POLITICS

David Koyzis

Four years after the release of Nelson Mandela from prison and 46 years after the National Party came to power in South Africa, apartheid will finally pass into history later this month. The country's first multiracial election will take place then, and it is widely expected that Mandela will become the first post-apartheid president.

Will South Africa's transition to multiracial democracy meet with success? In my very first column four years ago, I drew a parallel between the efforts of F.W. de Klerk and Mikhail Gorbachev to abolish the effects of a destructive ideology in their respective settings. Gorbachev has, of course, passed from the scene, and his well-intended attempt to open up the Soviet system ended up destroying it instead.

We have now witnessed nearly half a decade of post-communism, in which a superficial veneer of ideological certainty has worn off to reveal a profound and widespread sense of cynicism and apprehension over the future. Five years ago, it seemed that citizens of these countries were rushing to embrace western-style democracy. Now many of these same people appear to be seeking a nationalist savior who will deliver them from their present hardships.

Last month I wrote of the difficulty a country faces in attempting to adopt a constitutional system for which there is no supportive political culture. If this is true of Russia and Ukraine, it is possibly more true of South Africa, which cannot be said even to *have* a unified political culture. Democracy is not altogether unknown there. But up to now it has been restricted to some six million South Africans of unmixed European descent.

Against the norm

Most South Africans accept that apartheid greatly damaged the country and that the grand attempt to partition it along racial and ethnic lines was utopian and ultimately untenable. The notion that citizenship in the state can be allocated on an ethnic basis is one which from the beginning flew in the face of justice. From a normative standpoint, justice demands that the state protect all citizens equally, whatever their racial or ethnic origins. Any attempt to dilute this normative concept and to tie citizenship to something basically non-political in character is certain to cause much hardship, as Serbs, Croats and Bosnian Muslims are tragically experiencing in the Balkans.

At the same time, the effort to fashion a constitutional system that will preside over divergent cultures with potentially clashing assumptions about politics will not be easy. There is no guarantee of success, and there is a high probability of failure — in at least some sense. Let us pray that the large number of Christians in South Africa will contribute to a general spirit of forgiveness and reconciliation. A liberal measure of these qualities will be needed to make the new system work.

David Koyzis teaches political science at Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont.

Short jump to marriage status

...continued from p.

communication could be perceived as promoting hatred towards a person because of race, gender, age, creed, family status, handicap or sexual orientation. Both were recently withdrawn after concerned residents responded with a flurry of letters and phone calls.

Short jump

"In law, this bill would have the effect of making same sex couples the same as common law couples," Buckingham says.

What worries her most about that, she says, is the short jump from there to the status of married couples.

"Right now there is quite a bit of difference in treatment between common law and married couples before the law," says Buckingham.

Those differences could soon be swept aside if same sex couples are grouped with common law couples because "the gay community is more active and more likely to go to court than people in common law relationships," says Buckingham.

The current Ontario NDP government opted for the easy way out when it handed the issue of health benefits for same sex couples over to the Ontario Human Rights Commission. And when that tribunal decided in late 1992 to grant those benefits to government employees in same sex relationships, Queen's Park simply chose not to appeal.

The Ontario government then gave the matter to the Ontario Law Reform Commission (OLRC). That body recommended two things — that common law couples be treated like married couples, and that the province set up a "domestic partnership registry." After registering, any two people could be considered before the law almost equivalent to married. To end the relationship, the couple could simply file again at the registry and the legal clauses for marriage breakdown would apply, including division of property and financial support.

The OLRC will soon produce another report on whether health and pension benefits should be included in these partnerships. Ontario Attorney General Marion Boyd recently told reporters that her government is planning to introduce legislation that would require even private companies to extend health benefits to same sex partners of employees.

Hits wallets

Buckingham says evangelical Christians have been busy writing letters to their MPPs and circulating petitions protesting these changes. She admits that one reason for the timing of that flurry of activity is that the questions of health and pension benefits suddenly makes the issue of homosexuality hit the wallets of workers.

But she adds that another reason is that Christian social awareness has come of age.

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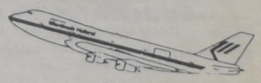

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Editorial

Can't a man drink in his own house?

A story in the *Globe and Mail* about a community in northern Ontario clearly outlines a conflict between the native ideal of justice and the Canadian justice system. The story centres around a native named Abel Hudson who lives in Bearskin Lake and who has been charged by a native tribunal with drinking in his own home on New Year's Day. Hudson is single and bothered no one while he was drinking. But he lives in a community that upholds its own bylaws against the use of alcohol for reasons that are peculiar to native experience with alcohol.

According to Canadian law, Hudson is free to do what he wants in his own home as long as he does not bother anyone else. But the elders of Bearskin Lake take a different view. The community lives in one house, one of them says, and the young people in the community know that Hudson drinks at home. They conclude that he is corrupting the community and warn him that he must stop drinking or face expulsion from the community.

But Hudson knows about the Canadian legal system and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and he says that he may challenge the legality of the band's bylaws.

No community standards?

The Bearskin Lake situation reminds me of a discussion I witnessed on television recently. Six panelists discussed whether or not there should be laws against pornography, prostitution and lap dancing. Several of the participants argued from an individualistic perspective. If prostitution or lap dancing takes place in a private establishment, they argued, then what people do there is their business as long as they don't harm anyone else.

One lawyer panelist suggested that there are no such things as community standards and that there should not be any legislation against sexual activities that involve consenting adults. Most of the other panelists agreed with him. Given that he made his comments in a time of social change when few people experience meaningful community and not many social values are held in common, there is some validity to his observation that there are no community standards. But it was clear from the discussion that his views are also prescriptive and try to nudge the issue further into relativism and individualism.

Communities have rights

Two panelists, one of them the Rev. Dr. Jonathan Gerstner, executive secretary for the Reformed Church in Canada, said that people in a neighborhood should have some say about what takes place in their vicinity and that the thought of grown men masturbating into dirty diapers in an establishment down the street is more than most people care to endure.

Gerstner represented what we may call an older Canadian value system that embeds the justice system in community values. Those community values in most places have a Christian origin. But they could still be community standards without being explicitly Christian.

This older view holds that Canadians are not just loose individuals scattered throughout the second-largest piece of real estate on earth, but that they form social clusters called neighborhoods or towns with recognizable characteristics. These social clusters have the right to set certain standards for behavior within them.

Hopes of a rebel

It's interesting to see that the panelists who espouse the older value system are in harmony with the Bearskin Lake elders' view of community. The battle lines seem to be drawn between Bearskin and bare skin.

But Abel Hudson is a rebel in his own community and he hopes that he will find an ally in the Canadian justice system which through the years has been turning away from community standards. Hudson is counting on a Canadian value system which says that there are no community standards and that every person has the right to do what he or she wants in his or her own house, as long as no one else is harmed (moral harm does not count). Hudson thinks the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms will support him.

We hope he's wrong. **BW**

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Let covenant logic prevail

Themistocles, who lived in the fifth century B.C., was a great warrior and became what today we would call the mayor of Athens. When his wife had a baby, Themistocles boasted that his infant son was the boss of the whole world. He came to that conclusion by means of a crafty piece of reasoning. He said:

My infant son rules his mother.
His mother rules me.
I rule the Athenians.
The Athenians rule the Greeks.
The Greeks rule Europe.
And Europe rules the world.
Therefore my infant son rules the world.

Themistocles' argument is called a sorites, or a number of heaped-up arguments. In fact, the argument is so well-known that it has been called the Sorites of Themistocles.

We as Christians could employ a similar type of argument and call it the Covenant Sorites. Thus a mother could say that her new infant daughter rules the universe. How is that? Simple.

My infant daughter is born into a believing family.

A believing family enjoys the promises of the covenant.

The covenant promises are the benefits gained by Christ.

Christ is sitting at the right hand of the Father.

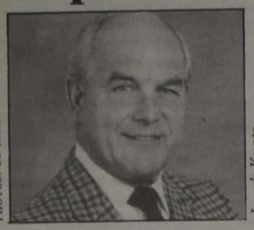
The Father rules the universe.

Therefore my baby daughter rules the universe.

The logic is irrefutable. Something to think about as you cradle that little child in your arms, believing parents.

Now make sure you raise that child as a royal child. **BW**

An open letter to non-subscribers



PHOTOS: CC FILES

Jacob Kuntz

To my great regret I have become convinced that many people in our Reformed community do not see the enormous value of *Christian Courier* for their community. If they did, they would stand behind the paper with their interest *and* their subscriptions.

Christian Courier is a unique paper. You won't find many of its kind in Canada.

No, it's not a perfect paper. Nor is the number of those we hope to reach in the hundreds of thousands. And we freely admit that CC is not without its shortcomings. If you want to criticize, go ahead: we'll gladly listen to constructive criticism. But it's better to light a candle than to curse the darkness.

Where in Canada will you find another independent paper that binds itself to the Scriptures and to a Reformed view of the world, and which from that starting point tries to help Christians find their way through the morass of today's political, social, educational and moral problems? You won't find another one!

CC a bargain

One would expect every thoughtful member of the Reformed community to say: "I must read that paper, for I belong to that community, I want to know what fellow Christians are thinking about today's problems. I want to be informed about the progress of the kingdom in Canada and abroad. I want help in thinking Christianly about trends in our society. And I'm interested in what's happening to my people here in Canada. I want to rejoice with those who rejoice and mourn with those who mourn."

Thank God that many people see it that way. They happily pay their $39.50 for a year's subscription (some even give a subscription to their married children). They know what a bargain it is to get a Christian paper that appears every week with so much diversified information — for an amount that is much less than what you pay for one evening's meal at a cheap restaurant with your family.

But many people have other priorities. They may read someone else's copy and happily use CC for their marriage , anniversary , or death announcement, or for the job opportunities that are advertised there, *without* ever considering to become a subscriber themselves.

Individualism destroys

In his book *Against the Night* Charles Colson says much about individualism. Three quotations: "Rank individualism destroys even the best of societies." "Today's pervasive individualism is destroying the subtle ties that bind people together." "We have been suckered in by the radical individualism of American culture."

I'm afraid that this is what is happening to us in the Reformed community in Canada. In many ways we don't feel a sense of community or feel bound together by the same convictions. Too many people live by the slogan: "Each for himself and God for us all." It seems that CC also experiences the consequences of that individualism.

It worries me. Except for our church papers, what do we have here in Canada that makes us *one* people, *one* community that stands for *one* cause: the cause of Christ?

I wanted to get this off my chest. I hope that Reformed non-subscribers will reconsider their non-commitment and that present subscribers will remain faithful to our paper.

We need the active support of all Reformed people who have a warm heart for the kingdom and who are gladly willing to pay their modest share in the continuation of *Christian Courier*.

Rev. Jacob Kuntz
member of the CC editorial board
Brampton, Ont.

Gleanings from reader survey 1993

Stan de Jong

Christian Courier's editorial advisory board (EAB), during its recent annual meeting, did some more navel gazing after readers' responses to a survey card were tabulated and analyzed.

Between Aug. 1 and Dec. 31, 1993, about 2,000 cards were mailed to those readers due to receive renewal subscription notices. Each recipient was asked to "take a moment" to rate no less than 25 categories of *Christian Courier* and return the completed card together with the renewal cheque. The ratings for each category were: 0 = do not read, 1 = not satisfied, 2 = satisfactory, 3 = excellent and 4 = blank.

A warm thank you

We do wish to express our appreciation to all those who participated in this valuable exercise. Of the 2,000 cards mailed, 659 were returned and tabulated: an excellent 33 per cent ratio!

Stan de Jong

If you noticed some changes in *Christian Courier* lately, you can bet it's because the EAB and the editor acted on some of the conclusions obtained from this survey.

Results very interesting

Many CC subscribers (especially those who participated in the survey) will, no doubt, be keenly interested in the survey's tabulations.

1. Respondents' Gender ratio: Of the 659 respondents, 47 per cent were male, 36 per cent were female, and 17 per cent left this section on the card blank.

2. Age breakdown: Of the total number of respondents, 10 per cent were younger than 40, 14 per cent were in the age group of 40 to 49, 26 per cent were in the 50 to 59 years range, the 60 plussers represented 40 per cent, and 10 per cent did not indicate their age.

3. Approval rating: It's heartwarming to learn that many *Christian Courier* readers consider the paper's content either "satisfactory" or "excellent." We have combined these two ratings to arrive at an "approval rating." From the highest to the lowest, they are as follows:

Category:	Approval rating:
Editorials	78%
News stories	77%
Advice column	75%
Issue articles	73%
Short stories	70%
News digest	68%
People profiles	65%
Theology	65%
Church	62%
Meditations	60%
Family issues	59%
Agriculture	56%
Society	53%
Book reviews	53%
Poetry	51%
Politics	50%
Environment	48%
Film reviews	44%
Economy	41%
Art/Music	40%
Cartoons	39%
Sport	26%

4. The "excellent" category: We would be amiss not to mention those writers who scored high marks in the "excellent" category. They are: Bert Witvoet (editorials), Peter and Marja Slofstra (advice column), Alice Los (family issues), Andrew Kuyvenhoven (theology), and Carl Tuyl (news digest). They deserve apple pie and ice cream!

A survey is a survey is a survey, that's all it is. Unlike the beggar at the banquet table, a survey is a rather fleeting thing. But it's good for some momentary analysis and reflection as we are busy awaiting the coming of Christ's kingdom.

Shall we ask Jean Chretien to issue an edict?

Bert Witvoet

Bert Witvoet

The open letter by Rev. Jacob Kuntz on this page is a *cri de coeur*. Kuntz is concerned about the future of the Reformed community in Canada. Communities are hard-won treasures by which the Lord allows certain riches to be passed on from generation to generation. Once a community has disintegrated, those treasures are lost.

It's not hard for a community to fall apart, just as it is not hard for a marriage to fall apart. In either case, all one has to do is do nothing. Especially in our times. The past was different. Everything was relatively stable and fixed, you might say, so that marriages "survived" even if the partners did not put out any effort to keep its spirit alive. You just did not divorce each other. The same applied to churches and communities. People stayed with the church and with the community because it did not occur to anyone not to stay.

Things are much different today. One has to work hard to keep a marriage going, a church working and a

Continued on p. 6...

Economic

Housekeeping

Bert Hielema

What if...?

For more than eight years, every day without fail I have written a short 400- to 450-word meditation in my journal based on a text from the Common Lectionary for that week. The lectionary is a widely used system ensuring that over a period of years the entire Bible is covered. Our minister bases his weekly sermon on it and when we visit Raleigh, N.C., where our youngest daughter lives, their minister uses it as well. So by daily writing and meditating on the very passages on which the Sunday service is based, I can possibly anticipate some of our minister's thoughts. But since all human minds are different, he usually explores surprisingly different angles, which is enriching.

A while ago my text for the day was Psalm 50:1: "The God of gods, the Lord has spoken, and summons the earth." That verse triggered all sorts of associations. Somehow the words reminded me of the natural disasters we are experiencing because of increasingly volatile weather.

Just in the past winter we have seen record-breaking colds and record-breaking snows. Not long ago Mount Pinatubo blew, the largest volcanic outburst of the century. It sent enough sulphur dioxide into the atmosphere to lower the Earth's temperature by more than one degree. This was enough to offset all global warming caused by our use of oil products; and, incidently, it tripled the market price of natural gas and boosted the oil and gas section of the stock market.

At the same time, El Nino, the name of the source of the warm currents and winds in the southern Pacific Ocean, rose more than three degrees above normal, which then unleashed hot winds across North and Central America, which, in turn, met the cold jet stream from the north and caused the record Midwest rains.

Is God 'summoning'?

I wonder, is this the God of gods speaking and summoning the earth?

By the time you read this, my wife and I will have travelled to Los Angeles, where another of our daughters lives. What if the real "Big One" strikes California — or Vancouver, where we also plan to go?

We here in Canada have just been exposed to new government budgets. Ottawa, in its newest forecast, projects inflation to be 0.8 per cent in 1994 and 1.3 per cent in 1995. What if that is incorrect? In the past year not only have natural gas prices soared, but also due to the change in the world's weather crop yields from Alberta to Ukraine, the latter, once Europe's breadbasket, have been slashed. The world's carry-over of grains and oilseeds into the new crop year is the second lowest in 22 years. What if the unpredictable weather continues and there is not the needed bountiful crop to rebuild inventories and keep prices stable?

What if...? The headline in the *Globe and Mail* a few weeks ago warned that "Antibiotics are losing the battle" and that a growing part of the population is "immunodefective" because the microbes are "a common environmental threat throughout our entire global village." Combine the increasing inability of antibiotics to fight bacteria with the disappearing ozone layer (which diminishes human ability to resist diseases) and the emerging of new killer viruses because of the denuding of the virgin forests, and chances are that infectious diseases such as bubonic plague, cholera, tuberculosis and others will become much more prevalent.

In these troubled times beware of safe predictions. When Greenspan, the financial big shot in Washington, says that the US is facing the best economic prospects in decades, translate this to mean nothing but hyperbole to ease his own troubled feelings and that of the nation.

Earthquakes, floods, hurricanes, deep-freeze. What if these are the early stages of a longterm trend with disturbing implications for economic development?

Bert Hielema, who lives in Tweed, Ont., is neither a pessimist (a person who believes in bad luck), nor an optimist (a person who believes in good luck). He claims to be a realist with hope, a quality neither a pessimist nor an optimist has.

Chretien's edict

...continued from p. 5

community talking to each other. There are too many distractions and too many choices whipping up the waters of society for one to count on smooth sailing. Frankly, there is an attitude among us that expects change. Things quickly become obsolete. We easily tire of the same.

So *Christian Courier* or *Calvinist Contact* has almost survived 50 years of publishing service. Does that mean that the next 50 years will be as easy, if it ever was easy? Something about our times tells us that the next five years will be harder to survive than the past 50. Why? Because of all of the above and a few other things which Jacob Kuntz touches on.

If we were living in Nehemiah's days, we might call every able-bodied Reformed adult to Jerusalem to rebuild the broken walls. We know from building projects in the past with church and school how easy it is to rally people around bricks and mortar. But how does one gather the faithful around a 35 by 29 centimetre tabloid? And how does one prove the importance of an editorial and a news report written from a Christian perspective?

Take your silver

Shall we ask Jean Chretien to issue the following edict?

"Now I, Jean Chretien, decree that any of the Reformed people in Canada, including teachers and preachers, who wish to subscribe to *Christian Courier* may do so. You may take your silver and your gold which you obtained from the fat of the land and do whatever seems best, in accordance with the will of your God. And I, Jean Chretien, will see to it that *Christian Courier* will continue to receive publication mail privileges and continue to experience freedom of expression, even the freedom to proclaim the kingship of Christ."

Does it take that kind of action to remind our people to join hands and work on being a community? I hope not, because Jean Chretien is never going to make that kind of proclamation in a multi-faith society. In fact, we live in a time when Christianity faces more and more hostility.

This is the time to work even harder at being a community, even if that community makes mistakes. God is faithful. He will make his kingdom come. No need to worry about that. But it would be nice to be part of that kingdom, don't you think? Be alert.

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Media / Arts

Author Alice Walker turns down award to protest California removal of her stories

SAN FRANCISCO, Calif. (EP) Alice Walker, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *The Color Purple*, rejected a literary award in California's fifth annual Governor's Awards for the Arts to protest the removal of two of her works from a state public school English test. Walker reportedly has asked the other three winners — artist David Hockney, actor Hal Holbrook, and director Steven Spielberg — to join her in her protest.

State education officials say they removed Walker's short story "Roselilly" from the test after the story and sample test questions were published in newspapers, explaining that the Department of Education's policy is to exclude items that have been prepublished.

But Walker claims she is the victim of censorship efforts by religious conservatives. Walker has asked the American Civil Liberties Union to help her obtain state documents relating to the removal of three of her stories from state tests.

The *San Francisco Chronicle* reported Feb. 19 that the story was removed from the test because of complaints by the Traditional Values Coalition, a conservative Christian group.

Susie Lange, spokesperson for the state Department of Education, told the newspaper the story is not barred from classrooms. "We don't see this as censorship," she said.

Outcry from parents

The story "Roselilly" is about the Mississippi wedding of a mother who questions marriage and religion. The Traditional Values Coalition testified against the Walker story, calling it anti-religious, and citing as an example the sentence, "She thinks of ropes, chains, handcuffs, his religion."

In a similar story, students at an Illinois high school will no longer be asked to read from a controversial health education textbook following complaints from parents about its chapters on abortion and sexual activity. The school district's board voted unanimously to ban the book *Human Sexuality* from classes at Belleville Township High School East after a committee of teachers and administrators reviewed the concerns of parents and determined that they were valid. Parents said the book promoted sexual activity, homosexuality, masturbation and abortion.

Also, nearly all references to homosexual parents have been dropped from a multicultural teaching guide for New York City's public schools. The original "Children of the Rainbow" guide suggested that younger children read such books as *Heather has Two Mommies* and *Gloria Goes to Gay Pride*, and said that children should be taught to acknowledge the "positive aspects" of homosexual households. That suggestion enraged parents, leading to the ouster of the chancellor of schools. The new guide says that "teachers should be aware of, and should encourage and stress acceptance of differing family structures," but does not specifically mention homosexual parents.

DC Talk, Steven Curtis Chapman take home grammy awards

NEW YORK, N.Y. (EP) — DC Talk's *Free at Last* album and Steven Curtis Chapman's *The Live Adventure* took the top gospel Grammy awards March 1 during the 36th annual Grammy Awards presentation.

Free at Last won the Grammy for the best rock gospel album, edging out Degarmo & Key, D O C , Phil Keaggy and Geoff Moore. DC Talk member Toby McKeehan said he hopes the Grammy Award will help the group get some crossover airplay in the secular market. He said the group's goal is to reach a larger audience without "selling out."

Steven Curtis Chapman's *The Live Adventure*, the concert album from his hugely successful "Great Adventure" tour, won the Grammy for best pop-contemporary gospel album.

Country music star Kathy Mattea took home a Grammy for best southern gospel, country gospel or bluegrass gospel album for *Good News*.

Six-time Grammy winner Shirley Caesar got a seventh to add to her collection for *Stand-Still*, the winner for best traditional gospel album.

The Winans won the Grammy for best contemporary soul album for *All Out*, and the Brooklyn Tabernacle Choir won the Grammy for best gospel album by a choir or chorus for *Live...We Come Rejoicing*.

Aretha Franklin, known as the "Queen of Soul," won a special lifetime achievement award — her 16th Grammy. Franklin began her career as a church choir soloist.

Children express dreams on new peace poster

AKRON, Pa. (MCC) — "i want to live when i get BIG. Violence destroys the dreams of children. Let's spread peace for the next generation!" This text is featured on Mennonite Central Committee's (MCC) newest peace poster.

The poster depicts children expressing wishes for the future. The children are printed in red, blue, yellow and green "because children identify strongly with rainbow colors," says Ron Tinsley, the MCC graphic artist who designed the poster. "The rainbow is also a Biblical symbol of hope," he adds.

The children's dreams are placed around them like rays of sunshine, in contrast with the poster's gray background suggestive of the tension and conflict prevalent in the world of today's children.

The poster caught the attention of Michio Ohno, secretary of the Japan Mennonite Emergency Relief Committee. He sent copies of it to all the Mennonite, Mennonite Brethren and Brethren in Christ churches in Japan, along with a Japanese translation of the text that can be attached to the poster.

Ed Epp, MCC secretary for Middle East programs, wrote the text.

To order this free 11 by 17 inch/28 by 43 cm poster contact MCC, P O Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500, phone (717) 859-1151; MCC Canada, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9, phone (204) 261-6381 or the MCC office nearest you.

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No 'moral restraint' in blasphemous ad

MUNICH, Germany (EP) — Advertisements in the Germany edition of *Elle* magazine depicting Jesus as a woman with female disciples dressed only in blue jeans has drawn condemnation from church leaders in Europe. Germany's Otto Kern clothing marketer also has versions of the ad depicting a male Jesus with open fly jeans and bare-breasted female disciples. According to *Christianity Today*, Germany's Office for Unfair Competition has vowed to take legal action against the magazine and the clothing marketer. The German Advertiser's Council has denounced the ads as "offensive and blasphemous, lacking any professional or moral restraints."

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Church, Marian Van Til, page editor

Namibian Reformed face church unity and dependence questions

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (REC) — Four years after Namibia's independence from South Africa, Namibian Reformed churches are struggling with how to handle their own apartheid legacy. As in South Africa, the Dutch Reformed in Namibia exist in three churches, formed historically on a racial basis. The largest group is the mostly white synod of the Dutch Reformed Church (NGK), a regional synod of the NGK in South Africa. There is a small branch of the Dutch Reformed Mission Church, originally set up for the mixed race people, also affiliated with its South African counterpart. The Evangelical Reformed Church of Africa (EGKA) is a completely Namibian church, originally intended for the black population.

Namibia was originally a German colony and Lutherans remain the largest Christian body here. In some areas where the struggle for independence was based, the EGKA became identified with the South Africans and has difficulty overcoming local biases. The EGKA's 17 congregations struggle to grow to a size where they can be independent and self-supporting.

Dependency is another legacy of apartheid. The NGK synod here supports the others heavily. In the EGKA all pastors' salaries are paid from the NGK in Namibia, or in a few cases, South Africa. The NGK would like to shift its support away from the synod offices and establish local congregation to congregation links. This, its proponents believe, is also the best first step toward solving the unity question. Others advocate that the three churches concerned should discuss and negotiate the unity and dependency questions at a national level.

Anglicans face bill for departing clergy

LONDON, England (REC) — The Church of England intends to pay compensation to its priests who leave because they oppose the ordination of women. As a gesture of goodwill for those opposed to the decision, it intends to pay a separation fee of 30,000 pounds to each.

The number who are leaving is still unknown. The church's commissioners apparently expected between 150 and 200 of the priests to leave. However, according to a report in *The Times*, 712 priests and deacons and seven bishops have announced their intention to leave. These priests and bishops are prepared to recognize the pope and seek some status within the Roman Catholic Church. Over 500 of these have gone further, declaring their willingness to be bound by the RCC and to accept the teachings of the Second Vatican Council as normative. The Anglican church, however, said there were only 121 who actually left. A spokesperson suggested that not all persons who sign a declaration in fact leave the church.

On March 12, the first women were ordained as priests. In all, about 1,200 women are seeking the office. At present, the Church of England has about 10,000 priests.

Guatemala's president calls for moral change

GUATEMALA CITY, Guatemala (EP) — Guatemala's President Ramiro de Leon Carpio, meeting with international evangelist Luis Palau, said that he supported the evangelist's efforts to bring change to the nation. "If we could solve the morality problem, it would be much easier to solve everything else, because all the other problems come out of that," said the president.

Palau visited with the president March 6, at the conclusion of a two-week crusade. The president's troubled administration is dealing with labor strikes, guerrilla activity and increasing crime and violence.

Evangelical leaders who invited Palau to Guatemala asked him to call Christians to reconciliation and rededication. Recent polls indicate about 22 per cent of the country is evangelical. A few years ago some claimed this figure to be 33 per cent or more.

"What was needed was a re-encounter with the Lord Jesus Christ, and this is exactly what has happened," said Benjamin Orozco, the Luis Palau Evangelistic Association's director for Central America. "Many former evangelicals have come back."

An estimated 150,000 people attended the crusade's final rally in Guatemala City.

Orthodox and Reformed find views compatible

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (REC) — At a fourth meeting of an official bilateral dialogue, Reformed and Orthodox theologians said they had found a consensus on the doctrine of Christology. In January, 27 theologians representing the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and the Orthodox Church concluded the series of talks with a discussion of the Incarnation.

In a statement, the groups admitted there were differences. "As regards the connection between the doctrine of the Trinity and the doctrine of the Incarnation, Orthodox and Reformed seem to follow two different kinds of approach which, however, are not incompatible," the statement concluded.

The statement noted that the Orthodox started with the mystery of the Incarnation as proclaimed in the Bible and expressed in their tradition and liturgy. The Reformed focused on the scriptural witness to the life, death and resurrection of Christ. They agreed that each approach reflects the encounter "with the reality of God as revealed in Christ."

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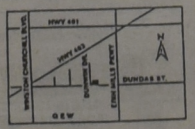

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Philippine police get moral training through missions

LUZON ISLAND, Philippines (EP) — The Philippine National Police are receiving moral instruction through evangelical missions, as a result of a presidential proclamation by General Fidel V. Ramos.

Ramos, the country's first Protestant president, outlined a "Moral Recovery Program" in his proclamation, citing the deteriorating "moral and spiritual condition of our country" as the main reason for taking action.

"The majority of our law enforcing agencies have lost their sense of moral fortitude," the proclamation states. The result has been "abuses of men in uniform" and "corrupt practices."

Rev. Leoncio Dignadice, director of Emmanuel Christian Churches, was chosen to lead the program in the Bicol region of Luzon Island. "Our government knows that the only solution to the problem is for our people to return to God," said Dignadice.

So far, 200 police have signed up for continuing Bible studies after hearing Dignadice's lecture as part of the program.

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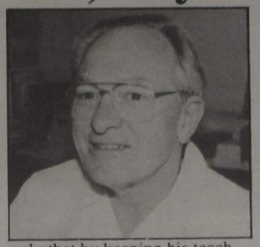
Andrew Kuyvenhoven
CHAPTER & VERSE

'Come to me,' says Rabbi Jesus



Well-known texts, like well-worn coins, are hard to decipher. Matthew 11:28-30 is one of these.

"Come to me all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

The speaker is Jesus. But who are the "weary and burdened" whom Jesus is calling to come to him? And what is meant by the "yoke" that Jesus wants to give to them?

The burden these people are carrying is not the burden of sin (as I said in a sermon very early in my career). Neither are these burdens the sorrow and sadness that weigh us down. Of course the weary ones must go to Jesus. Every bone-tired mother and frustrated preacher should do that. But the Great Invitation of Matthew 11:28-20 has a different tenor.

Unnecessary obligations

Jesus addresses people who follow the wrong religious teachers. Their rabbis have laid heavy burdens on them. Now the great Rabbi comes, our chief prophet and teacher. He calls all who are burdened and loaded to come to him and exchange that yoke for the yoke he gives. "Yoke" stands for the sum total of religious obligations laid on us by our teachers. Jesus promises not only that by keeping his teaching we will find rest, but that we will also experience his yoke to be easy and his burden light.

The words about burden-bearing and putting a yoke on people are also in Matthew 23:4. In biting words Jesus accuses the leaders of "tying up heavy burdens, hard to bear, and laying them on the shoulders of others" while they themselves don't move a finger to lift them.

In Acts 15 the leaders of the early church have to decide whether or not the believing Gentiles "must be circumcised and required to obey the law of Moses" (v. 5). Simon Peter thought they should not do it: "Why do you try to test God by putting on the necks of the disciples a yoke that neither we nor our fathers have been able to bear?" (v. 10). And finally the Holy Spirit and the assembly decided "not to burden you" with anything except some very basic requirements (v. 19).

Impositions

Religious leaders always lay a yoke or burden on the congregation. The Hutterites do, the Mennonites do, the Roman Catholics do and the Reformed of all shapes do. It's the list of: pay for this and pray for that, don't do this and do go there. Sometimes it's: wear this, dress this way, observe that day, use these envelopes. Non-Christian religious leaders, from the Jewish Chassidim to the Buddhist monks prepare other burdens and yokes. But one cannot be an adherent of any religion without bearing the yoke of the leader.

Jesus calls us away from all other religious leaders. We must not just come to church but come to *him*. We must not merely listen to what he says, but "take up his yoke" — be his disciples. And then we will find out that this is the only religion that gives rest and the life that satisfies.

As for contemporary Christian teachers and preachers, they better make sure that a) they bear Christ's yoke themselves; and b) they never impose more nor require less than the Master demands.

Andrew Kuyvenhoven is a retired Christian Reformed pastor who is a Canadian living in the Unites States. But during April he is in Romania, teaching in a Hungarian church.

4,000 languages still Scripture-free

NEW YORK, N.Y. (EP) — At the end of 1993, it was reported that 2,062 languages have at least one book of the Bible, 799 have New Testaments, and 337 have complete Bibles. The information, compiled by the United Bible Societies, includes Scriptures that have been translated by different organizations. It is estimated that there are as many as 6,000 languages spoken throughout the world.

First Bible in modern Gugerati language complete

AHMEDABAD, India (EP) — The first printing of the contemporary translation of the Bible into the Gujerati language was sold out during its release ceremony in February. Over 500 Christian leaders and pastors attended the ceremony in Ahmedabad, celebrating the Bible for the 45 million speakers of Gujerati who reside in the Indian State of Gujerat.

"This is an historic day for us," said Bishop Paul Chauhan of the Church of North India, who presided over the ceremony. "Our previous translation could only be understood by older people. Now we have a Bible that can be understood by everyone." The translation took 14 years.

God's doorkeeper

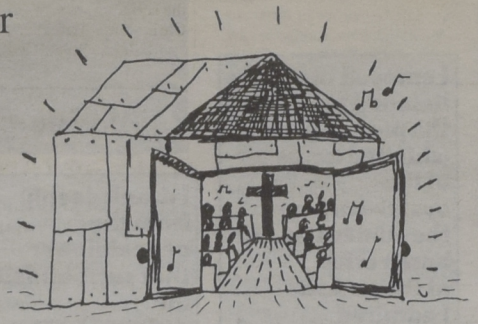
Hilda J. Born

In Psalm 84:10b the writer says that he'd rather be a doorkeeper in the house of his God than live with wicked people. Since I'd never heard a sermon preached on doorkeepers, I imagined them to be either greeters or ushers.

My sister, a church janitor or custodian, felt this verse referred to her calling. However, on our visit to Botswana I think I finally discovered the real biblical meaning.

On a warm Sunday morning we walked to the local tin-roofed church, and quietly slipped in. Carefully I watched the proceedings, to see if we could fit into the congregational pattern. Some of the hymn tunes I recognized, the words were in Setswana, the local language. Although I speak three languages, these words were all foreign to me.

The doors on each side of the church were standing wide open to let in latecomers and welcome breezes of fresh air. However, I noticed that when prayer time came, the doors were promptly closed.



After the opening prayer, the doors were opened again. This was followed with joyful hymns, offerings, announcements, etc. But when it was time for prayer, the young persons stationed at the doorposts went into action. Immediately they shut the blue-trimmed door beside them.

After the "Amen," the doors were again flung open. I reasoned that this was probably to let the neighborhood listen to the reading and preaching of God's Word as well as hear enthusiastic singing of gospel hymns. If this were so, then why the difference during the prayer interval?

Slowly it sank in — part of the service was for pure worship with God alone. The world must be shut out. Nothing should come between him and us when we link together in prayer. Distractions from outside cannot be allowed to interrupt and sidetrack our thoughts. We need to focus solely on God.

Although I still don't know what the sermon was about on that Sunday morning, I learned more than I often do when I can understand every word. There, in Botswana, I saw an obvious demonstration of reverence when addressing God.

This clear lesson comes back when people and things crowd in and threaten to hide God from me. Then I remember that when we seek him earnestly, God can be found anywhere on the globe. He even fits the visual language to meet the special need of the moment.

Hilda Born lives in Abbotsford, B.C.

Look for Peter & Marja on page 12

Poem

PHOTOS: RAYMOND SCHRAA

Jentje Mar early in the morning in April 1993. (This photo was judged the "Best Overall Photograph" at the 1993 photo competition at the Edmonton Klondike Days and merited a second prize at the Edmonton Journal/Canon/Astral competition.)

**It was a special
day in April
when after forty
years
I found myself
back in the Frisian
polders
which I had
crisscrossed
as a boy
...long ago...**

**The parcels of land
that once
belonged
to my father
where I had raked
hay
milked cows
fixed fences
cleaned ditches
were still there
looked still the
same
...as long ago...**

**I enjoyed the birds
listened to
the piercing
whistled notes
of the
*oyster-catchers***
**the somewhat
harsh cries
of the *godwits***
**I admired
the summersaults
of the *lapwings***
...just as long ago...

Lapwing eggs

Godwit

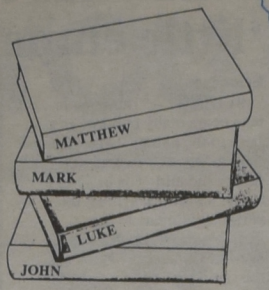
**I got my feet wet
in the fresh green
grass
heavy with dew
early in the morn-
ing
...just as long ago...**

**I drank deeply
from the
peacefulness
that surrounded
me
as I sat
beside the still
waters
of the "Jentje Mar"
and remembered
the times
when I hunted for
lapwing eggs
when I listened
to a lark's voice
in praise of the
Creator
...long ago...**

**What a treasure
to re-live
once more
the good times I
had
when as a lad
I wandered in the
fields
near my home town
on an April day
...long ago....**

**Raymond J.
Schraa
Edmonton**

Did Jesus really say, 'I am the resurrection'?



Jesus Seminar scholars deny it

Dan Allison

Did Jesus really say the things attributed to him in the four Gospels? For a panel of New Testament scholars calling themselves the Jesus Seminar, the answer is a resounding No. By their estimate, only 18 per cent of the words attributed to Jesus were actually spoken by the carpenter from Nazareth who is worshipped by millions as God.

According to the 78 Jesus Seminar scholars, Jesus did not teach the Lord's Prayer or most of the Sermon on the Mount; he never calmed storms, raised the dead or claimed to be God incarnate. These conclusions, recently published in *The Five Gospels: What Did Jesus Really Say?* (MacMillan), have renewed a 200-year-old controversy over the authenticity of the Gospels.

Panel chairperson Robert Funk, a former professor of religious studies at the University of Montana, set forth the essential premise of the Jesus Seminar at the beginning of their work eight years ago, saying, "The Jesus of the Gospel of John is a figment of the evangelist's pious imagination." After eight years, Funk still contends, "The Gospels are really religious propaganda."

Has the Jesus Seminar reached legitimate conclusions? Is the Jesus of the Bible really a figment of the writers' imaginations? Some basic principles of historical and literary scholarship combined with analysis of the scholars' motives and biases may provide fresh answers.

Seemingly unimportant details

Comparing the Gospels with acknowledged works of fiction and "religious propaganda" is a logical starting point. The Gospel writers use none of the conventions of fiction or mythology. Compared to stirring mythological epics like *The Iliad, The Bhagavad-Gita* and *Beowulf*, the Gospels are rather straightforward reading, more like journalism than mythology. C.S. Lewis noted that the Gospels contain too many realistic but relatively unimportant details with no symbolic or religious meaning: the number of fish netted on an overnight expedition (153, not a symbolic "seventy times seven"); Jesus writing in the dirt with his finger (a fictional account would have told us *what* he wrote); and Jesus rubbing his spittle in a man's eyes (a procedure that, thankfully, did not become a church ritual).

Skilled fiction writers like Homer and Sophocles crafted their mythic masterpieces with great heroes, great conflicts and layer upon layer of symbolism. In contrast, the gospel writers, among them a fisherman and a tax collector, simply recorded what they observed, using none of the contrivances or tools of the mythmaker or the novelist. A slick piece of "religious propaganda" would exclude less important details. The number "153" has no extra significance; it's simply the number of fish that were netted.

Furthermore, mythologized accounts of history paint important characters as flawless paragons of virtue; when I was in school, we learned that George Washington could not tell a lie. If the Gospels are religious propaganda, early Christian leaders would be portrayed in a flattering rather than an embarrassing light; the doubting of Thomas and the three denials of Christ by Peter would be whitewashed.

Minor discrepancies

The Jesus Seminarians also contend that the Gospels are unreliable because of apparent internal discrepancies and conflicts (19th-century scholars called this "the synoptic problem"). A close reading of the four Gospels shows that the writers in only several instances seem to disagree about minor details. Plausibly, one observer was closer to an episode or event, thus seeing and hearing more than other witnesses; we don't know what Jesus wrote in the dirt because the narrator didn't *see* what was written there. Several "discrepancies" are resolved simply by understanding that the writers did not always feel compelled to relate events in precise chronological order.

And (as any law student knows) when eyewitnesses disagree slightly over minor details, it's because they're telling *the truth*; absolute consistency regarding every detail is the sign of fabrication, the telling giveaway that witnesses have contrived to pull a fast one. So rather than demonstrating the unreliability of the Gospels, minor inconsistencies reassure us that the Gospel writers were human beings honestly telling it as they saw it.

Too many witnesses

In fact, attempts to tell the story of Jesus any other way surely would have been (and indeed were) rejected. Jesus healed and fed thousands in the cities and villages where he walked; even decades later, the Apostle Paul refers (in a letter to the church at Corinth) to more than 500 eyewitnesses of the resurrected Jesus, most of whom were still alive as he wrote (1 Cor. 15:6). It is simply not possible that a fabricated "tradition" which did not match the historical facts known to these hundreds of witnesses would have been accepted.

Moreover, the apostles and the believers surrounding them faced severe persecution in the decades after Jesus. It is unthinkable that thousands would have consciously created and accepted what they knew to be an outright lie and *then* give their lives for a Jesus they *knew* to be a figment of their own imagination. The Apostle John insisted that he was writing about a truth "which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched" (1 John 1:1).

God has not said it

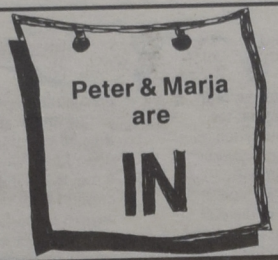
Ironically, the Genesis account of Adam's and Eve's meeting with the serpent is applicable to the Jesus Seminar controversy. According to Genesis, God told the pair not to taste the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The serpent, however, contended that God had not said they shouldn't taste the fruit (Gen. 3:1), and even if he did say it, he didn't really mean it. The consequences for Adam and Eve of doubting God's words are familiar to us all.

Comparing the Jesus Seminarians to the serpent in the garden may perhaps be reaching too far. Nevertheless, their underlying assumption is that because the Gospel writers had religious convictions, they were incapable of writing accurate history and, instead, manipulated historical material to suit their own prejudices. As the Jesus Seminar scholars have *their* own religious biases, the same charge may logically apply to them.

Funk and his associates reject the authenticity of the Gospels not on the basis of the evidence but rather on the basis of their personal opinions (20 centuries removed) of what Jesus must have been like. They create a fantasy Jesus who did not start a church and is not the Savior of the world. Such views are *not* the views expressed in the historical material, and no compelling reasons for doubting that material exist. The best conclusion is that it is the Jesus Seminar's findings, and not the Gospels, that are the fictional products of overactive theological imaginations.

Dan Allison is a former English teacher and radio talk show host who now attends Bible college in St. Petersburg, Florida.

Advice



Dear P & M:

Our older children attended the local Christian school for many years. For them, education was commonplace, expected and unquestioned. Unfortunately, our youngest child experiences it differently. For him education is made to appear as a favor bestowed upon us by a generous bureaucracy out of the kindness of their hearts. That's because he has some different identifying labels that often keep people from seeing him as a person. Some of those labels are Down's Syndrome, handicapped and disabled.

We tried to enrol our son in our local Christian school and were refused. The reasons? It will cost too much and the teachers don't have special training; therefore they won't feel comfortable with him in the classroom.

After some lobbying, our son was enrolled in our neighborhood public school in regular age-appropriate classes with regular teachers who are willing to try and to learn. When he needs extra help it comes in the form of an itinerant teacher, a classroom aide or community college students. The itinerant teacher is allocated two hours per child per week to adapt curriculum. The aide is assigned to three children and divides her time between three classrooms according to need.

The college students, each assigned to one child, spend three full days a week for one semester as part of their teacher training, so they work for free. We are blessed to have such a willing, caring, hardworking staff at our school. It seems ironic, however, that the staff of a public school shows more evidence of the fruit of the spirit than the staff of the Christian school.

If there's a question in all of this, I suppose it's this: Is it Christlike to discriminate by refusing a Christian education to certain children just because it will cost more in terms of money, resources and time?

I know that the Lord works in mysterious ways and that he also works to my child's good. I'm thankful for his excellent educational setting, albeit secular. But I must honestly say that I feel betrayed by the Christian school community.

Dear Feeling Betrayed:

It certainly seems unfair that your child was refused. Anyone in your situation would feel hurt and abandoned by the school's decision. For example, one of our panelists has a relative who, years later, still resents her local Christian school's lack of support for her child who was a "slow learner."

Lack of money and trained staff have not prevented other Christian schools from accepting the challenge of integrating special needs children into their regular classrooms. We are aware of three students in three different Christian schools in Ontario who are doing well.

In one instance the school has hired someone to come in for one hour each morning to work with the child. Two other teachers give up their spares to provide additional help. These three schools have also utilized the limited but loving help of parent volunteers and students from the upper grades. In each case the presence of these kids has had a very positive effect on everyone, especially their classmates. Their work with slow learners has developed such fruits of the Spirit as patience, kindness, and gentleness. Surely this is a wonderful byproduct.

It is understandable that the staff or the board would feel overwhelmed. You have not described the extent of your child's disabilities or how much help your son requires. These factors may make a difference. On the other hand, your letter suggests that your son is doing well with "some extra help at times." Based on this we wish that the school would at least have given it a try, even though it's true that it has fewer resources than the public school system. But please don't judge the school for lacking the fruit of the Spirit. Only observe that they may have been motivated more by fear than trust.

You can appeal this decision to Christian Schools International (CSI). In fact, CSI has lots of experience in this area and can offer the school many helpful resources. You will, however, have to consider the effects of a move on your son, especially if the school capitulates and accepts him reluctantly. Unfortunately, a move now may no longer be in his best interests.

By law, the government must provide an education for every child that applies. As Reformed Christians we are led by a higher law which insists that every covenant child has a right to a Christ-centred education. In our opinion, your community has reneged on the promises it made when your son was baptized. We hope that the board, staff, parents and students can rally together around your son.

Write to: P & M
c/o Christian Courier
4-261 Martindale Road
St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1

Peter and Marja Slofstra are a pastor and wife team living in St. Catharines, Ont. They are assisted by an advisory panel consisting of Herman de Jong, Bill Lidkea, Tom Zeyl, Irene Bom, Marian Van Til and Bert Witvoet.

China has too many 'little emperors'

Eric Hagt

BEIJING — "The woman who bears many children is a hero to the nation." Mao Tse-tung made such statements during the mid-'50s in a bid to create a bulwark against imperialistic threats to the People's Republic. Numerous age-old Chinese proverbs share the same sentiment when they hail a man with many sons.

These ideas successfully pervaded the vast and populous agrarian regions of China, where over 80 per cent of China's people live. Rural people view children as an economic asset and old-age security. No wonder the population in China has grown to an astronomical 1.23 billion, demanding drastic control.

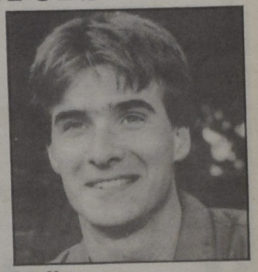
Upon close inspection, it becomes apparent that the root of most of China's economic and social problems lies in its excessively high population. Deng Xiaoping realized this early on. In 1978 he implemented a hard-line policy known as the "one-child policy."

However, Deng's family planning strategies have not influenced the masses quite as effectively as Mao and centuries of history. As a result, much of the rural areas still produce families of two and three children. Yet under severe monetary and social penalties it is estimated that approximately 60 per cent of the population adheres to the mandate of one child per family.

Disadvantages of one child

The single children of these modern Chinese families have earned a name for themselves. With mom, dad and both grandparents all doting on one small human being, they have been dubbed the "little emperors." A new proverb has even been created for this phenomenon. It translates as follows: "Even the sun, moon and stars will be gotten from the sky for the "little emperor."

The ramifications of a whole generation of single-child families are subtle but nevertheless real. The concept of brother/sister is disappearing, and along with it the growing experience of sharing, relating and a sense of responsibility. The reality of a generation of spoiled kids is hard to deny.



Eric Hagt

Also, parents put all their dreams and aspirations into the one child. This places enormous pressure to succeed on the child.

Since the average income of a Chinese family is approximately $100 Canadian per month, parents live frugally in order to support the high cost of their child's music lessons, dancing lessons and Western clothing. When I walk down the street I often see a young child dressed considerably better than his parents. Children are often heard ordering their parents about.

Pop psychologists are coming out of the woodwork to deal with this phenomenon. Television programs debating this subject are almost a daily occurrence.

Unbalanced society

Besides the domestic problems created by the "one-child policy" there is also the larger problem that China will have a majority of older people in several decades. A balanced society has the bulk of its population below the age of 50. Since this will be reversed in China within 30 years, many are worried that the younger minority will not be able to support the older majority.

And because the rural areas are difficult to police, the ratio of uneducated poor rural to educated urban steadily increases.

Considering the condition of China 20 years ago, many of Deng's policies have undeniably benefitted the economy. Population control seems necessary. But the emergence of "little emperors" and an unbalanced society are unavoidable dilemmas China must address.

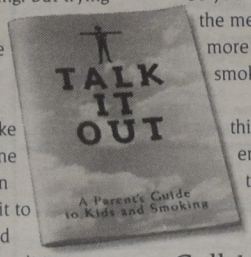
Eric Hagt is studying Chinese on a two-year exchange at the Beijing Foreign Language Institute in China.

YOU CANNOT STOP YOUR CHILD FROM SMOKING

Frankly, the pressures of fitting-in combined with a natural curiosity could persuade even the strongest-willed child to try smoking. But trying once is not the same as trying more than once. And that's where you come in.

Help your children realize where that first cigarette could take them. Point out that nicotine is one of the most addictive drugs known to science – an even tougher habit to break than heroin or cocaine. And the fact that most smokers would quit tomorrow, if only they could.

It's a perfect time to share these thoughts.

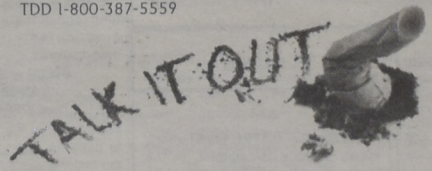


Because right now, your kids are seeing and hearing a province-wide anti-smoking campaign.

So you can bet it's on their minds. But of all the messages they receive, none will deliver more impact than yours. Even if you're a smoker yourself.

To prepare for your talk, call for this booklet. Then give your kids the encouragement they need to stop themselves from smoking. Before it's too late.

Call 1-800-268-1154
In Toronto call 314-5518
TDD 1-800-387-5559



Ministry of Health
Ontario

Classifieds

Classified Rates

Births $25.00
Marriages & Engagements $40.00
Anniversaries $45.00
2-column anniversaries . $90.00
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All other one-column classified advertisements: $13.50 per column inch. NOTE: Minimum fee is $25.00. Letter under file number $35.00 extra. Photos: $25.00 additional charge. (Free when published with anniversary announcement celebrating 50 years or more.)

Note: All rates shown above are GST inclusive

ATTENTION!

a) *Christian Courier* reserves the right to print classifieds using our usual format.,

b) A sheet with information about an obituary sent by funeral homes is *not* acceptable since it leads to errors and confusion.

c) Photographs sent by fax *are not* acceptable. If you wish a photo included, send us the original.

d) *Christian Courier* will not be responsible for any errors due to handwritten or phoned-in advertisements.

e) The rate shown above for classifieds covers any length up to six column inches. *Christian Courier* reserves the right to charge for additional column inches at the rate of $13.50 per column inch (GST incl.).

NEWLYWEDS & NEW PARENTS

We offer a one-year subscription for only $20.00 (GST incl.) to the couples whose wedding is announced in the *Christian Courier* and to the parents of the child whose birth announcement appears in our paper. To facilitate matters, we encourage those who request the wedding or birth announcement to enclose $20.00 and the couple's correct address.

Christian Courier
4-261 Martindale Rd.
St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1
Phone: (905) 682-8311
Fax: (905) 682-8313

Birthdays

TERMORSHUIZEN:

We thank God that on March 28, 1994, our father, grandfather and great-grandfather

ERNST TERMORSHUIZEN

celebrated his 90th birthday. We pray that the Lord continues to be with dad and opa.

Love from your family.

Mailing address: 477 Ridge Rd. W., R.R. 1, Grimsby, ON L3M 4E7

Marriages

BOELENS-KOK:

FREDA ELIZABETH BOELENS
and
GEORGE JERRY KOK

would like to announce the happy event of their forthcoming marriage, the Lord willing, on Saturday, April 30, 1994, at 3 p.m.

This celebration of Christian love will take place in the Strathroy East Chr. Ref. Church, Strathroy, Ont., with Rev. J. Nutma officiating.

Freda is the daughter of Mr. Wesley Boelens of Wyoming, Ont., and the late Mrs. Frances Boelens. Jerry is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Eli Kok of Ilderton.

Future address: 470 Tanya St., Strathroy, ON N7G 4A6

BOKMA-DEMIK:

It is with great joy that we, the parents, John and Alice Bokma of Port Dover, and Peter and Lydia Demik of Hamilton, announce the forthcoming wedding of our children

SONYA LEANNE
to
PHILIP MARK

on May 7, 1994, D.V., at 2:30 p.m., in the Simcoe Immanuel Chr. Ref. Church, Rev. B. DeJonge of Ancaster officiating.

Sonya and Phil, we wish you God's richest blessing as you travel down life's pathway together.

"A cord of three strands is not quickly broken" (Eccl. 4:12b).

Future address: Unit 1, 280 Limeridge Rd. West, Hamilton, ON L9C 2V4

DEVRIES-WAGTER:

In the spirit of Christian joy we announce the marriage of

BRENDA CARRIE
to
RODNEY DWAYNE

children of Edward and Rhea DeVries of Smithville, Ont., and Ben and Cathie Wagter of Dunnville, Ont., the Lord willing, on Saturday April 16, 1994, at 2 p.m., in the Smithville Chr. Ref. Church, Rev. John De Jong officiating.

Future address: 718 Tamarac St., Dunnville, ON N1A 2E4

For Rent

Available May 1, 1994, **small apartment**, suitable for student, in the Carlton-Dorchester Blvd. area of St. Catharines, Ont.

Call (905) 646-2845

Anniversaries

Congratulations to Henry and Johanna Kreeft (nee Zielhuis) on the occasion of their 50th wedding anniversary!

Oosterend Listowel
1954 April 14 1994
"I will never leave you or forsake you" (Joshua 1:5).

With praise and thankfulness to God we are happy to announce the 40th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents

TED and GAY HIEMSTRA
(DE BOER)

With love and congratulations from your family.

Sid & Bonnie Hiemstra — Listowel, Ont.
Andy & Marg Hiemstra — Port Perry, Ont.
Michelle, Stephen
Arlene & Thom McElhanney — Whitby, Ont.
Sean, Jeremy
Diane & Bill Vyn — London, Ont.
Benjamin
Peter Hiemstra — London, Ont.
Steve & Sandy Hiemstra — Mitchell, Ont.
Robert Hiemstra & Tasha (friend) — Kitchener, Ont.

Open house from 2 to 4 p.m., on Saturday, April 30, 1994, at Sid and Bonnie Hiemstra, 770 Elizabeth St. W., Listowel, ON N4W 1E9

Best wishes only please.

Home address: 835 Richmond Ave., N., Listowel, ON N4W 2Z9

1934 April 5 1994
We wish to celebrate the 60th wedding anniversary of our parents, grandparents and great-grandparents

SIEDS and MARTJE
VANDERTUIN
(nee WESTERHOF)

We hope that the Lord will be near to them on this special day and in the coming years.

With love from all your children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Anniversaries

Hattem Sarnia
1944 April 12 1994
With thankfulness to the Lord, we joyfully announce the 50th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents

HENRY and JOHANNA
KREEFT
(nee ZIELHUIS)

We thank God for the countless blessings He has bestowed on you and your marriage and pray that God will continue to bless you for many more years.

With love from:

John & Gin Kreeft — London, Ont.
Kim, Michael
Renee & Peter Robinson-Kreeft — Saltspring Island, B.C.
Jordan
Trix & Davey Bradley — Waterloo, Ont.
Tyler, Joel

An open house will be held in the Fellowship hall of the First Chr. Ref. Church at Exmouth Street in Sarnia, Ont., on April 16, 1994, from 2 to 5 p.m.

Best wishes only.

Home address: 968 Exmouth St., Sarnia, ON N7S 1W1

1959 April 17 1994
"The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms" (Deut. 33:27a).

With praise and thanksgiving to God, we joyfully announce the 35th anniversary of our parents and grandparents

TONY and JANE VAN KAMPEN
(nee DE KAM)

Marjorie & Chris Perry — Belleville, Ont.
Matthew, Andrew
Nancy & George Horlings — Chokwe, Mozambique
Jason, Meghan
Sharon — Thamesford, Ont.
Jennifer — Thamesford, Ont.

Home address: R.R. #2, Thamesford, ON N0M 2M0

Anniversaries

1954 April 15 1994
"Our soul waits for the Lord, he is our help and shield" (Ps. 33:20).

IPE and GRACE
VANDER DEEN
(nee FEDDEMA)

With gratitude and praise to God we joyfully celebrate the 40th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents.

Patricia & Rudy Heidelberg — St. Albert, Alta.
Mark, Julianna
Ivan & Diana Vander Deen — Waterford, Ont.
Ivan, Aileen, David, Michelle, Stephanie, Christopher, Amber
Irene & Charlie Dykxhoorn — Springfield, Ont.
Daniel, Sandra, Gregory, Karla
Richard & Barb Vander Deen — Strathroy, Ont.
Michael, Karen, Sarah, Andrea, David
Clarence & Irene Vander Deen — Strathroy, Ont.
Beth, Jeffery, Arlene, Carl, Rachel
Sharon & Steve Talsma — Harley, Ont.
Amy, Julie, Karen, Elaine
John & Teresa Vander Deen — Strathroy, Ont.
Emily

Home address: 6 Ross Court, Strathroy, ON N7G 3W6

Appingedam Hamilton
On April 19, 1994, D.V., we hope to celebrate the 60th wedding anniversary of our parents, grandparents and great-grandparents

HENDRIK ARENT WINTER
and
JOHANNA (JAGER) WINTER

You have shown to us through sorrows and joys that we can always rely on our Heavenly Father on whom you so much depended. We thank you and much love from:

Peter & Nell Winter
Grace & Henk Rumph
Jake & Alice Winter
Anne & John Knier
Ben & Julie Winter
Henry & Emma Winter
John & Jacomina Winter
Reynold & Cathy Winter
Gerda & Brian van Staalduinen
Ellen & John Hunse
Joanne & Ted Parker

38 grandchildren and 23 great-grandchildren.

"Give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread" (Prov. 30:8b).

Open house, D.V., will be at the Mount Hamilton Chr. Ref. Church, on April 22, 1994, from 7 to 9 p.m.

Best wishes only please.

Mailing address: Wellingstone Christian Home, Apt. 205, 1415 Upper Wellington St., Hamilton, ON L9A 5E8

Classifieds

Obituaries

21-11-1911 24-3-1994

Heel plotseling is in Jezus ontslapen mijn lieve Mien, onze lieve Mam en oma

WILHELMINA PIETERNELLA DE MOOR-RINGNALDA

Zij hield van het leven met ons, maar verlangde ook thuis te mogen komen bij haar Heer.

2 Corinthiers 5:6-9.

H. de Moor — Waddinxveen, the Neth.

Jos de Moor en Tjits de Moor-Kerkhof — Waddinxveen, the Neth.

Tineke Bosman-de Moor en Jan Bosman — Baam, the Neth.

Doris VandenBerg-de Moor en Lawrence VandenBerg — Allendale, U.S.A.

Wilma VanBrummelen-de Moor en Harro VanBrummelen — Langley, B.C.

Dick de Moor (deceased) en Trudy de Moor-Bakker — Oshawa, Ont.

Henry de Moor en Ina de Moor-Pijpers — Grand Rapids, Mich.

Bob de Moor en Margo de Moor-Hofstra — Langley, B.C.

Ary de Moor en Sharon de Moor-Postma — Edmonton, Alta.

Joanne Booy-de Moor en Dirk Booy — Arusha, Tanzania

kleinkinderen en achterkleinkinderen.

Correspondentie adres: Tollenslaan 99, 2741 XZ Waddinxveen, the Netherlands.

De begrafenis heeft inmiddels plaatsgehad op dinsdag 29 maart 1994 op de Algemene Begraafplaats te Waddinxveen.

Opende Chilliwack

1930 1994

ANNE (ANDY) FOLKERTS

"You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will take me into glory. Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you. My flesh and heart may fail but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever" (Ps. 73:24-26).

This was the hope of papa while he walked on earth and the hope that he now enjoys with his Father in glory after he was suddenly taken from his loving family.

He will be missed greatly by his wife Anna (Piers).

His children and grandchildren:

Harry & MaryAnne Folkerts
Jake, Andrea, Sean, Michael

John & Wendy Folkerts
Steven, David, Shannon, Keith

Gerald & Arlis Folkerts
Jared, Janis, Jesse

Ken & Alice Folkerts
Kristen, Kayla, Erik

Rudy & Shirley Folkerts
Wade, Meika

Melvin & Liz Jacobi
Clifford, Christina, Whitney

Hans Folkerts & Karryn Bouwman (fiancee)

The funeral service was held at the Chilliwack Chr. Ref. Church on Tuesday, March 22, 1994, with Pastor Arie Leegwater officiating.

Correspondence address: Mrs. Anna Folkerts, 46531 Yale Rd., Chilliwack, BC V2P 2R6

Obituaries

1905-1994

The Lord called home

HEINZE MULDER

beloved husband of Pearl (Pietje) Mulder of Medicine Hat, Alta., on Sunday, Feb. 27, 1994.

Heinze Mulder is survived by four sons:

Harry Mulder — Medicine Hat, Alta.

Trinus & Nel Mulder — Medicine Hat, Alta.

Harm & Linda Mulder — Stoney Plain, Alta.

Joe & Marlene Mulder — Edmonton, Alta.

and nine grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Funeral service was conducted by Rev. Corvers on Thursday, March 3, 1994.

Correspondence address: Mrs. Pearl Mulder, #110-20 Viscount Ave. SW, Medicine Hat, AB T1A 8M1

St. Annen Sarnia

Groningen Ontario

March 14, 1929 March 13, 1994

"The Lord is my shepherd..." (Ps. 23).

THEODORUS VEENKAMP

was taken from us to be home with his Lord. He will be sadly missed by his wife, Pauline Veenkamp (nee van de Wetering), children and grandchildren:

John & Wendie Veenkamp — Cornwall
Jamie, Jeffrey

Greg & MaryAnne Ayrheart — Meaford
Cassandra, Joey, Nathan

Albert & Wilma Veenkamp — Waterford
Nicole, Matthew

Ted Veenkamp — Cambridge

Jim & Renee Veenkamp — Oshawa

Jeanette Veenkamp — Sarnia

Also survived by two brothers and two sisters:

Henny & Jake Dorgeloos

Bob & Ann Veenkamp

Shorty & Anne Veenkamp

Teena & Hank Nienhuis

and son-in-law of Albert and Marie VandeWetering (all of Sarnia).

Son of the late Antje and Jan C. Veenkamp.

The funeral service was held on Wednesday, March 16, 1994, in Redeemer Chr. Ref. Church, Sarnia. Pastor Neil DeKoning officiating.

Correspondence address: Mrs. P. Veenkamp, 1404 Blackwell Sd. Rd., Sarnia, ON N7T 7H2

Look for Peter and Marja on page 12...

For Sale

Pleasure or Profit

Rubber stamp shop supplies for sale in South-Western Ontario. Owner retiring. Ideal for starting a small business. Great as a hobby, too! Included are blocks, handles, rubber, pads, drill, press, cabinets, logos, etc. Make a deal! If you are interested, write to: **File #2617, c/o Christian Courier, 4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1**

Summer Job Market

University student in biology and environmental studies (25 years old), seeking summer employment in Niagara region. Six years secretarial experience, WordPerfect, PlanPerfect, DataPerfect, spreadsheet, AccPac, multi-lingual.

Please call 682-9068 (evenings)

If you believe that honesty and integrity far outweigh political correctness, please read the following ad: **RBC student looking for summer employment** paying "Big Bucks". Willing to work hard for it. Tuition isn't cheap these days! Call Tim at:

(616) 669-9859 before May 7
(905) 934-3547 after May 7

Miscellaneous

How to Write Your Memoirs!

or talk your parents into writing theirs. A manual with proven methods to write life stories, writing and publishing info. Send $7.95 to Family Memories Pub., 44 South Dr., St. Catharines, ON L2R 4V2 or call:

(905) 988-6174

Teachers

PRINCE GEORGE, B.C.: The Association for Christian Education of Prince George invites applications for a teaching position in **Primary (Grade K-3)** preferably with a French and/or P.E. specialty and in **Junior/Secondary (Grade 8-10)** a generalist position with emphasis on English and fine arts.

Please send resumes, including a Christian Education Philosophy statement to:

Cedars Chr. School
701 N. Nechako Rd.
Prince George, BC V2K 1A2
Attention: Hiring Committee
Fax: (604) 564-0729

Teachers

BURNS LAKE, B.C.: Burns Lake Chr. School is seeking **three teachers** to take up the challenge of helping our school develop its potential in its second year of operation. Our school has multi-grade classrooms for primary/elementary grades, plus Kindergarten.

Please contact us at:

Burns Lake Chr. School
Box 574
Burns Lake, BC V0J 1E0

BOWMANVILLE, Ont.: Durham Chr. High School invites applicants for **possible openings** in **history** and **French.** Send application to:

Durham Chr. High School
Att.: Ren Siebenga, Principal
R.R. #1, Bowmanville, ON
L1C 3K2
Phone: (905) 623-3487

BOWMANVILLE, Ont.: Knox Chr. School anticipates an opening at the **primary level** for the 1994-95 school year. Please forward letter of application and resume to:

Mr. W.M. Helmus, Principal
410 Scugog St., R.R. 1
Bowmanville, ON L1C 3K2
Phone: (905) 623-5871
Fax: (905) 623-8877

DUCHESS, Alta.: Newell Chr. School, a growing interdenominational school (40 students, K-9), located two hours east of Calgary, Alta., is now accepting applications for **two teachers** (Grades 1, 2, 3 and 4, 5, 6) for the 94-95 school year. A **principal** with administrative experience will also be required. All applicants must have a strong commitment to Christian education. Send resumes to chairperson:

Mr. David Hartgerink
Box 912
Brooks, AB T1R 1B8
Phone: (403) 362-3502

LETHBRIDGE, Alta.: Immanuel Chr. School invites applications from teachers for **Grades 1** and **6** for the 1994/1995 school term. Please forward all letters of inquiry and application to:

Mr. H. Konynenbelt, Principal
Immanuel Chr. School
802-6 Avenue North
Lethbridge, AB T1H 0S1
Phone: (403) 328-4782 or 328-4783

LONDON, Ont.: London District Chr. Secondary School requires a **French teacher** for the 94/95 school year. Special education training would be an asset. Send letter of application and resume to:

Mr. H. Kooy, Principal
24 Braeside Ave.
London, ON N5W 1V3
Phone: (519) 455-4360

Teachers

1994-1995

ROCKY MOUNTAIN HOUSE, Alta.: Rocky Chr. School is soliciting applicants for a **Grade 6 position.** Being able to teach some physical education in Junior High will be an asset. We are also looking for a **half-time teachers aid.** Rocky Chr. School is an interdenominational school with approximately 175 students. Anyone interested in joining a dynamic dedicated staff of teachers can forward their resume and transcripts to:

Mr. William Slofstra, Principal
5204-54 Avenue
Rocky Mountain House, AB
T0M 1T3
Phone: (403) 845-3516 (school)
(403) 845-5598 (home)

VICTORIA, B.C.: Pacific Chr. Sec. School, Victoria, B.C., requires a **French/Girls P.E. teacher** to fill a maternity leave ending Jan. 31, 1995. There is also a **possible industrial education position** available. Contact:

John A. Messelink, Principal
Pacific Chr. Sec. School
654 Agnes St.
Victoria, BC V8Z 2E6
Phone: (604) 479-4532
Fax: (604) 479-3511

WASAGA BEACH, Ont.: Silvercrest Chr. School has a **definite opening** in the **upper elementary level, possible opening** in the **primary level** and a **definite part-time French position.** Silvercrest is a non-denominational Christian school located in Wasaga Beach, Ont. We are looking for Christian individuals who feel called to serve Christ in an educational setting. Inquiries should be sent to:

Mr. Greg Ayrheart, Principal
Silvercrest Chr. School
380 Zoo Park Road
Wasaga Beach, ON L0L 2P0
or call: (705) 429-4303
or fax (705) 445-9626

WOODBRIDGE, Ont.: Toronto District Chr. High School invites qualified teachers to apply for a **part-time** position in **music.** Please send resumes or address inquiries to:

William Barneveld, Principal
377 Woodbridge Avenue
Woodbridge, ON L4L 2S8
Phone: (905) 851-1772

SARNIA, Ont.: Lambton Chr. High School solicits inquiries relating to a **possible** position in **French** for the 1994-95 school year. Please address your inquiry and resume to:

W. Drost, Principal
LCHS
295 Essex St.
Sarnia, ON N7T 4S3
Phone: (519) 337-9122

Classifieds

Teachers

WOODSTOCK, Ont.: John Knox Chr. School invites applications for a **possible Grade 1 teaching position** (50%), mornings only, for the 1994-95 school year. **Experience or interest with learning resource programs is an asset.** Please send letter of application and resume to:

Mr. Andy Bouma, interim Principal
John Knox Chr. School
Box 243
800 Juliana Drive
Woodstock, ON N4S 7W8
Phone: (519) 539-1492

For Rent

APARTMENT AVAILABLE — very close to the Western University and King's College campuses in London, Ont., from **May 1 - Sept. 1, 1994**. Two-bedroom $400 monthly.
Call (613) 838-3235

Miscellaneous

Summer Job Market

Attention: All Students

We know that many of you are thinking about summer jobs at this time.
As in previous years, *Christian Courier* will carry the Summer Job Market section in the Classifieds. We urge you to check this section until **May 27**.

Send us your announcement, and include name, age, address, phone number, experience and type of work you are seeking. This service is free of charge. We have only one request: Please cancel the ad as soon as you have found employment so that you don't use up valuable space needlessly.

Good job hunting!

Stan de Jong
Manager

Job Opportunities

Dordt College Openings
Faculty Positions

Agriculture: Instructor with responsibilities for teaching and farm operation on the 160-acre Agriculture Stewardship Center. Desired qualifications are farm management expertise with diversified experience in crop/livestock operation, demonstrated teaching ability, a master's degree in an agriculture-related area, and a commitment to work with colleagues and students in a dynamic and growing agriculture program.

Agri-business: Two-year position with teaching responsibilities in the areas of farm management, marketing, and applied agricultural economics. Doctorate and teaching experience desirable.

Health, Physical Education, Recreation (HPER): Tenure-track position with teaching duties in such areas as exercise science, health and coaching theory, along with coaching responsibilities in women's sports (volleyball). Women are especially encouraged to apply.

Dordt College seeks individuals who are committed to a Reformed, biblical perspective and educational philosophy and have academic and personal qualifications for teaching and scholarship or administrative leadership. Review of candidates will begin immediately and continue until positions are filled.

Send letter of interest, resume, and graduate transcripts to **Dr. Rockne McCarthy, V.P. forAcademic Affairs,** at the address below.

Dordt College strongly encourages applications from women, minorities, and disabled persons.

DORDT COLLEGE
Sioux Center, Iowa 51250-1697
FAX: 712-722-4496

Cedars Christian School

Prince George, B.C.
invites applications for the position of

PRINCIPAL

to assume responsibilities starting the 1994/95 school year.

Cedars Christian school provides Christian education from preschool to Grade 10 in an interdenominational setting and will be moving to add Grades 11 and 12 in the near future. High school experience preferred.

Please send resumes, including a Christian Education Philosophy statement, to:
Board President
Cedars Christian School
701 North Nechako Rd.
Prince George, BC V2K 1A2
Phone: (604) 564-0707; Fax: (604) 564-0729

Willowdale Christian School

invites applications for the position of

PRINCIPAL

to assume responsibilities for the 1994/1995 school year. Send resume, statement of educational philosophy and other pertinent information to:

Dennis Reeve
Secretary of the Board
278 Badessa Circle
Thornhill, ON L4J 6C5
Phone: (905) 669-2059

SEEKING A PASTOR

The Alliston, Ont., Christian Reformed Church, a 40-year-old congregation of 77 families, is currently seeking an **experienced pastor** to lead us in our Christian walk of life. Our priorities are Biblical preaching, outreach and an interest in youth. Alliston is a growing community situated in southcentral Ontario, approximately 45 minutes north of Toronto. Inquiries and or resumes may be forwarded to the **Search Committee, c/o Mr. Aris deBruin, .R.R. #2, Beeton, ON L0G 1A0, phone (705) 435-5317, fax (705) 435-3351**

Part-time regional reporter

Christian Courier is looking for a part-time regional reporter in southern British Columbia. The assignment involves writing two or three news stories a month about people or events that are significant and of interest to the Reformed/Christian community. This is an exciting assignment for someone who enjoys writing and keeping abreast of events and doesn't mind picking up a phone. Journalistic training and experience preferred. **Please apply to Bert Witvoet, editor.**

Youth Director Needed

Ebenezer Chr. Ref. Church in **Leduc, Alta.**, needs a **Youth Director** for a half-time position. Ebenezer is a church with 350 members under the age of 30, and with a variety of youth programs in place. We are looking for a dynamic, committed youth director with experience and training to supply support and leadership. If interested, please write to:

Al Notenbomer, R.R. #2, Leduc, AB T9E 2X2

MINI-CONVENTION

Celebrating the 40th anniversary of the **Bowmanville-Quinte-Ottawa Regions of the Can. Fed. of Chr. Ref. Women. DATE: May 18, 1994. PLACE:** Days Inn, Kingston, Ont. **TIME:** 9:45 a.m. (coffee at 9:15 a.m.). **A.M. speaker:** Dr. W. VanGroningen. **TOPIC:** "To God be the Glory." **P.M. speaker:** Rev. Devona Wiederick. **TOPIC:** "Forward in Faith." **Tickets:** $16 lunch. incl. Order before **May 1st** from: **S. Tadema, 706 Milford Dr., Kingston, ON K7M 6B4 Phone: (613) 384-3431**

Classifieds

Miscellaneous	Miscellaneous	Events	Events	Miscellaneous

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and assume ownership of a long-established Dutch deli business with a large customer base. Owner wishes to concentrate energies on a related business enterprise. Required is an energetic person or family to further develop the deli. Business has a solid growth pattern and is profitable. Owner is willing to provide guidance and training. Feel free to contact:

Dave Pel & Co
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Fifth Anniversary Strathroy Plymouth Chrysler Ltd.

SPECIAL ORGAN CONCERT

Guest Organist: Andre Knevel
Westmount Christian Reformed Church
Strathroy, Ont.
Saturday, April 23, 1994, at 7:30 p.m.

Free admission and refreshments

Toronto District Christian High School

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

All TDCH alumni and past/present staff are invited to attend the first TDCH Alumni Meeting on **April 28, 1994, at 7:30 p.m. at TDCH, Woodbridge, Ont.**
An evening of fun, fellowship and reminiscing. Elect an executive, form the Association and plan for the future.
Refreshments and desserts provided. For further information contact TDCH office at (416) 741-2273 or (905) 851-1772.

FESTIVAL OF PRAISE

featuring

7 Christian Male Choruses from Southern Ontario!

Henk-Jan & Herman Drost - Trumpets • Wim VanSuydam - Organ

SATURDAY, APRIL 23, 1994 - 7:30 P.M.
Yorkminster Park Baptist Church
1585 Yonge Street (near St. Clair), Toronto, Ontario

Wim VanSuydam Organ

Henk-Jan & Herman Drost Trumpets

Participating Choirs from:

Sarnia	'Sursum Corda' Male Choir of Sarnia, Henk Nicholls - dir.
St. Thomas	St. Thomas District Male Choir: 'Crescendo', Jack Dykstra - dir.
St. Catharines	Garden City Christian Male Chorus, Jan Venema - dir.
	'Collegium Musicum' Male Choir of St. Catharines, Gerzinus Hoekstra - dir.
Hamilton	'The Ambassadors' Hamilton and District Male Choir, Harold DeHaan - dir.
Springdale	'The Crusaders' Christan Male Chorus, Gerry Numan - dir.
Brampton	'The Choraliers' Christian Male Chorus, Gerry Numan - dir.

Admission: $10.00 p.p. • Seniors & Students $7.50

Host Choir: The Choraliers Christian Male Chorus, Brampton

Third Annual John Calvin Christian School Invitational Hockey Tournament

April 15 and 16, 1994
Friday Night: 7 p.m. - 12 p.m.
All day Satuday: 7 a.m. - 6 p.m.
at the Tri-Township Arena, Mt. Brydges.

Teams from Calvin, Calvin Alumni, Dordt Alumni, Strathroy, Redeemer, Mt. Brydges, Sarnia, Ancaster and Burlington (2) will be involved.

Bring the whole family! This promises to be an exciting two-day tournament!
Admission: Adults (14 yrs. and up) $5 (two-day pass)
Children (up to 13 yrs. old) FREE!

All proceeds will go to the Auxiliary for Christian Education.

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RETIREMENT

Henry Bergsma

is retiring. His relatives and friends are invited to come and celebrate the finish of a race well run.
DATE: Saturday, June 25, 1994
TIME: Social Hour - 7 p.m.
Program - 8 p.m.
PLACE:
Timothy Christian School
49 Ferris Lane
Barrie, Ont.

ATTENTION

Campgrounds & Resort Areas

With Summer 1994 not that far away, we plan to group your advertisements in the **April 22, 1994,** issue. The advertising deadline is **April 13, 1994.**

Many *Christian Courier* readers will soon be making 1994 vacation plans. Let us have your ad copy and instructions as soon as possible so that our readers will know who and where you are!

Stan de Jong
Manager

Classifieds/Events

Low Car Rentals in Holland

We have all kinds of cars and campers from Fl. 180 per week exclusive of tax. Contact:

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Haven Oost 18, 7731 GT Ommen (OV), the Neth.
Phone: 011-31-5291-51960
Fax: 011-31-5291-51927

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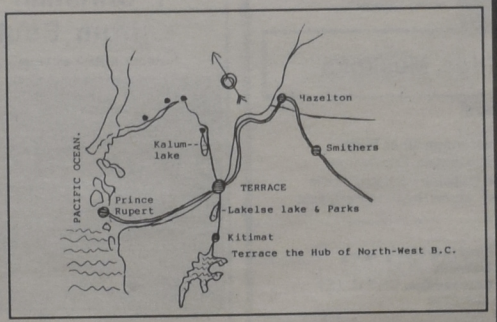
During the summer our worship services are at 10:30 a.m., and 6:30 p.m.



If you are travelling through or vacationing in beautiful Northwest B.C., we invite you to worship with us. CRC ministers who are willing to preach during our pastor's study leave (June 12 and 19) or vacation (Aug. 7 thru Sept. 5) are invited to contact us.

Ed de Walle, Pres. (604) 635-2092
Jan Lok, V.P. (604) 635-7795
Fax: (604) 638-7635

JOIN THE C C SPRING 1994 CAMPAIGN

Many magazines and tabloids in Canada are struggling and C C is no exception! If each subscriber would gain us **one** new subscriber before the end of May 1994, we would, in one wonderful swoop, be where we were 10 years ago. Look around you — you'll see signs of new life everywhere. Why not blossom with the lilacs and hatch with the robins? Convince only **one** person or **one** family that **Christian Courier** is worth subscribing to. Send us this coupon today and we will send you a copy of **Building on the Rock**, Rev. Henry Van Andel's insightful meditations on Christ's Sermon on the Mount.

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c) offer expires May 31, 1994

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Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Prov./State: _____ Code: _____

Clip this out and send to:
Christian Courier, 4-261 Martindale Road
St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1

Church News

Christian Reformed Church

Calls received:

— to Cephas, Peterborough, Ont., Rev. Ralph Koops of Cambridge, Ont., (Note: CC erroneously reported that Rev. Koops had accepted this call).

Calls declined:

— to Bethel, Listowel, Ont., Rev. John D. Hellinga of Grand Haven, Mich.

Calls accepted:

— to Immanuel, Cornwall, Ont., Rev. Allan C. Groen of Edmonton, Alta.

— to Aylmer, Ont., Rev. John D. Hellinga of Grand Haven, Mich.

— to Faith, Burlington, Ont., Rev. Peter Veltman of Emo, Ont.

— to First, Kitchener, Ont., Rev. Harry J. Bierman of Lethbridge, Alta.

— to Blyth, Ont., Rev. Adrian A. Van Geest of Grimsby, Ont.

Calendar

April 9 "Spring Fair & Bake Sale," 10 a.m. - 3 p.m., The King's University College, **Edmonton**, Alta. Free admission!

April 9 The "Woodstock Dutch Theatre Group" presents the three-act comedy "Met Hartelijke Gelukwensen," 8 p.m., Queen Mary Public School, **Peterborough**, Ont. Tickets: (705) 748-0282, or 742-5973 or 745-2324.

April 9 Spring concert by Leendert Kooij's OCMA, with Andre Knevel at the organ. Proceeds for Holland Marsh DCS. At 8 p.m., Trinity United Church, **Newmarket**, Ont. Tickets: (905) 775-4030.

April 9 CLAC's 38th national convention at the Lamplighter Inn, **London**, Ont. Theme: "Equipped to Challenge." Day-time session 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Banquet at 6 p.m. Speaker: P. Nelissen of the World Confed. of Labour, Brussels, Belgium. Info. & tickets: (905) 670-7383.

April 10 Dutch worship service led by Rev. Ralph Koops, at 3 p.m., CRC, **Ancaster**, Ont.

April 11 "An evening with Redeemer College" at Holland Chr. Homes, **Brampton**, Ont. Reception at 7 p.m., program at 7:30 p.m.

April 11-22 CSS's Adriana Pierik plans to be in the Vancouver/Lower Fraser Valley area.

April 15 Spring concert by The King's University College Concert Choir with the Edmonton Youth Orchestra. At 8 p.m., West End CRC, **Edmonton**, Alta. Tickets: (403) 465-3500.

April 15 Concert Choir (directed by Christiaan Teeuwsen) presents its "Pre-Tour Concert," 8 p.m., Redeemer College, **Ancaster**, Ont. Freewill offering.

April 15 Variety concert in support of community food bank by "The Ambassadors" male chorus, 8 p.m., Bethel CRC, **Listowel**, Ont. Tickets $6 p.p., $20 family.

April 16 Mary Rice Hopkins in concert, 6 p.m., Jubilee Fellowship CRC, **St. Catharines**, Ont. Tickets $6 p.p. Info.: (905) 892-6434.

April 16 "Spring Praise Concert" by the Hamilton Philharmonic Youth Orchestra and the "Soli Deo Gloria Choir" (central Niagara CRCs), at 7:30 p.m., Bethany CRC, **Fenwick**, Ont. Info.: (905) 892-6659 or 892-2140.

April 16 Spring concert by Leendert Kooij's OCMA, with Andre Knevel at the organ. At 8 p.m., Maranatha CRC, **Belleville**, Ont. Proceeds for World Missions. Tickets: (613) 969-1478/966-5898.

April 16 Conference on "Alcoholism & ohter drug addictions," at Zion Chr. Ref. Church, **Oshawa**, Ont. Speaker: Dr. Rich Grevengoed on "Family Disease - Family Recovery." Eight workships. Register before April 4 with Jane de Haan, (905) 679-6490. Coffee and registration at 8:30 a.m.

April 16 Concert by "The Ambassadors" male chorus, 7:30 p.m. CRC, **Rochester**, N.Y. (2750 Atlantic Ave., Penfield). For Christian Heritage Homes.

April 16 Annual spring concert by a 130-voice massed choir, directed by Andrew Bouma, 8 p.m., Maranatha CRC, **Woodstock**, Ont. Also featuring: guest organist Jan Overduin and the London District Chr. High School chamber choir.

April 17-19 Annual convention of the Canadian Church Press at Queen of the Apostles Renewal Centre, **Mississauga**, Ont. Info.: (416) 960-8500.

April 20 Spring concert by Leendert Kooij's OCMA, with Andre Knevel at the organ. Proceeds for Heritage Chr. School, At 8 p.m., Cambridge St. United Church, **Lindsay**, Ont. Tickets: (705) 324-9582.

World news

Carl D. Tuyl

While I write this, which is much earlier than when you read it, the press resonates with the after-shocks of Oscars, Junos, Gretzky goals and figure skating competitions. You have seen and heard it all. What of course you did not know is that Mila Mulroney's father was Margaret Trudeau's psychiatrist. I have it from my deep-throat Ottawa source.

★ ★ ★

The Bank of Canada tried to stop the decline of the dollar and raised the prime rate. The banks, like hounds after a fox, smelled money and upped the mortgage rate.

Our Numero Uno Minister was in Mexico, breaking with the tradition that the first visit of a new prime minister is to be to Washington. The visit was marred by the assassination of presidential candidate Luis Donaldo Colosio.

In the fall of this year Chretien will visit China. There is a new policy at External Affairs: Canada will not make trade links conditional upon improved human rights in the countries with which it does business. In other words the stuff produced in China's prisons and other slave labor camps will continue to flood our local markets putting Canadians out of work.

★ ★ ★

The British Columbia government is launching a counter offensive against Greenpeace in Europe. At the same time, the Liberal Party's leader in that most Western province of our land has started a propaganda offensive to rid himself of the rich, out-of-touch city-slicker image which persistently clings to Gordon Campbell like a stamp to a letter in the mail.

★ ★ ★

Baseball is back from Florida and other warm Southern spots. Can the tulips be far behind?

★ ★ ★

Remember the old saying: a penny for your thoughts? The Royal Canadian Mint is now having thoughts for the penny. The penny is on the way out. Oh for the good old days!

★ ★ ★

It's hard to please the press. The *Globe and Mail* used to berate the antics of the Rat Pack in the House of Commons; now it scolds "this new regime of pinkie-pointing gentility the Grits are attempting to enforce."

And from the "solidarity forever camp" comes the astonishing news that someone has wrapped Bob White — Mr. Union — in a cloud of suspicion by hinting at shenanigans with the Canadian Auto Workers pension funds.

★ ★ ★

Another unthinkable long-time political no-no looms at the horizon of possibility: taxing food. The Commons' finance committee is reported to be in favor of taxing our cornflakes and other food items. When that recommendation winds up in the House you can expect protests that will register on the Richter scale.

★ ★ ★

New Brunswick will be the testing ground for a program that will see welfare recipients work for the dole. Although it is still voluntary, it reminds me too much of the pre-war Dutch welfare policy which sent people to dig ditches in newly diked polders.

★ ★ ★

These are mean times. Here in Kingston Township they are going to charge kids for playing soccer or baseball in public parks. Penny-pinching is an irritating necessity for all levels of government.

★ ★ ★

Shocking things happen in Kalamazoo, Mich., where Earl Courtney said that his wife, Merry, shot him in the chest for eating macaroni and cheese she had made for herself. Earl, however, is not the retaliating kind. He asked the judge not to jail Merry for attempted murder. He believes that marriage is for better or worse.

★ ★ ★

Places where you should not go on vacation: Egypt — where Muslim fundamentalists shoot at people with Tilley pants; Turkey — where Kurdish nationalists shoot at people who pay with travel checks; Miami — where everybody shoots at everybody; Moscow — where the Russian Mafia ambushes foreigners; South Africa — where Inkatha people shoot at ANC members and vice versa; or Palestine — where the shooting never stops. Believe me you are safer in your own backyard.

★ ★ ★

Here are a few "did-you-knows": Singapore's gross national product is higher than that of Britain; the Great Lakes contain 20 per cent of all the fresh water in the world: Italy has had more than 50 governments since World War II, and the KLM will pretty soon discontinue its "fly and ride" program, meaning: no more one-week-free car at Schiphol.

bytes

★ ★ ★

Sixteen months after the marines hit the beaches of Mogadishu, the American military intervention in Somalia ended on March 25. Looting what's left of the U.S. compound has already started.

★ ★ ★

There is a tense standoff between North Korea and South Korea. North Korea has put its troops on alert, stepped up civil defense exercises and increased its troop activity by 50 per cent. South Korean president Kim Young-sam flew to Beijing to plead with China to press North Korea to abandon its dream of obtaining nuclear weapons.

Elections were going on in Turkey, Italy and Ukraine, but no results were evident at the time of this writing.

★ ★ ★

In Edmonton Sophie Mighall was hospitalized. The doctor came to ask the usual questions. Have you ever had diabetes? Have you ever had heart problems? He listed about 15 diseases and Sophie's answer was always No. In frustration the doctor asked what she did have. She leaned back in her bed, lifted her arm airily and said: "Charm." Sophie is 84 years young, plays poker and every day spends time at the Edmonton track.

It was Passover and Easter. Hope revived, faith celebrated and life appreciated. I am off to the reunion of the third battalion of the Princess Irene Regiment. Maybe I'll tell you about it.

Carl Tuyl is chaplaincy co-ordinator in Canada for the Christian Reformed Church and is a member of the Ontario Multifaith Council on Spiritual and Religious Care.

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The Strength of Their Years
by Tymen E. Hofman

On Nov. 18, 1993, Hendrika Postman Hofman died at the age of 97 in Picture Butte, Alta. She was the last surviving charter member of the first organized Chr. Ref. Church in Canada. The Hofman family arrived in Canada in 1904. They homesteaded west of Lethbridge, Alta., and helped start the Nieuw Nijverdal CRC, which later became known as the Nobleford CRC. Hendrika married Martin Hofman in 1921. They had four children, one of whom is Tymen, the author of a fascinating book about this early pioneer period.
Just send us $6.95 per book! We'll pay the GST.
(Note: Due to the March 1 increase in postal rates we've had to up the price by $1.00). Send your order to:
Calvinist Contact Publishing Ltd.
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St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1

News

Homosexuality is not the unforgivable sin

Herb Vanderbeek

WINNIPEG — Promoted as Canada's "first national Christian counselling conference," Winnipeg 94 was held to promote a new effectiveness in the ministry to people struggling with homosexuality.

Keynote speaker Dr. Elizabeth Moberly urged the church to be an important resource in the healing process of those individuals who are struggling to come out of a homosexual lifestyle and orientation.

Moberly, director of psychosexual education and therapy with BCM International, outlined not only her views about how healing can take place in the life of the homosexual but also her theories surrounding the root causes of homosexuality.

About 100 people attended the preconference sessions on March 18 geared for pastors and counsellors. The March 18-19 conference itself was attended by about 275 people, the majority of whom came from outside of Winnipeg.

The workshops focused on three main areas: the medical community, homosexuality and AIDS; family/marriage issues and homosexuality; and therapy and the churches' role in recovery.

Negative role of church

The main emphasis of Winnipeg 94 was the bringing of healing to those struggling with homosexuality. The central role of the church was not only stressed by Dr. Elizabeth Moberly but it was also stressed by workshop leaders.

While the positive role of the church as a place for healing was emphasized, the negative role the church can play was also considered. Within the context of the church, the grace of our Lord is to be shown in terms of loving the sinner and not the sin.

But this grace can hardly be shown in an atmosphere of harsh condemnation and rejection. "If no help or healing is offered," says Moberly, "small wonder that people struggling with homosexuality go into the lifestyle. The attitude is that since the church has rejected me, therefore God has also rejected me."

Moberly reminds her audience that homosexuality is not the unforgivable sin (see Mk. 3:29) and that heterosexuality is not a passport to heaven.

Moberly adds that the reason for change in the life of the homosexual is not necessarily that the person becomes a heterosexual but rather that homosexual behavior is not God-honoring behavior. Even the early church was aware of this issue and held out the hope of healing to those struggling (1 Cor. 6:9-11), says Moberly.

Overcome fears

Pat Allen, vice-president of Exodus International and executive director of New Directions for Life Ministries in Toronto, reminded the audience that in order to properly minister to those struggling with homosexuality, church people must first confront their own fears and common misconceptions surrounding the issue of homosexuality.

Quite often, says Allen, the people in the church want homosexuals to be healed so they themselves can feel comfortable. But the issue is not about feeling comfortable with yourself, but rather the issue is about extending hope and healing to those who are suffering.

Hope is best extended by telling the homosexuals that they need to know Jesus and the healing he can provide. They do not necessarily need to hear that they need to leave the gay lifestyle, says Allen. If they are coming to church to seek freedom, they already know that their lifestyle is in conflict with their value system. The church needs to form a community that makes a difference, says Allen. The church must show a sense of grace so that people may be brought back to a true relationship with God.

The next conference is tentatively scheduled to happen in two years. While this year's format with its academic orientation was seen as successful, the next conference will be broader in scope with perhaps more of an emphasis on Christian ethics and lifestyle and with a more definite spiritual component, says organizer Rod Giesbrecht.

Giesbrecht plans to compile a list of Christian therapists and counsellors who could serve as speakers on a wide range of topics.

Herb Vanderbeek lives in Winnipeg.

The wedding was also for Mom

Bert Witvoet

GRIMSBY, Ont. — Shalom Manor is a nursing home where the average age of its residents is eighty plus. Never before has a wedding taken place in its 175-seat chapel.

But Feb. 19 was different. Dave Marchand and Cynthia Dam exchanged vows in the presence of relatives, friends and Shalom residents.

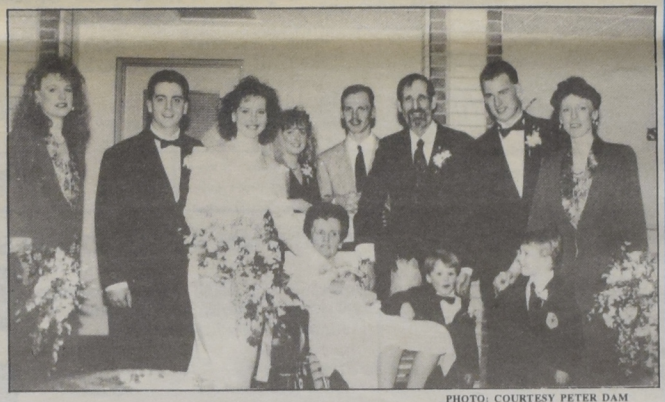

PHOTO: COURTESY PETER DAM

From l. to r.: Renita Dam, Dave Marchand, Cynthia Dam, Marian and Louis Dam (their two sons Benjamin and Peter are in the foreground), Eileen Dam (sitting), Peter Dam, Andrew Dam and Sherry Dam

No, Dave and Cynthia are not Shalom residents. But Cynthia's mother, Eileen, is.

Eileen, who is 51 and the youngest Shalom resident, is suffering from a disorder that doctors have not been able to identify. The disease attacks her brain and her motor functions. The disease began to manifest itself in 1987 and Eileen was admitted to Shalom in 1992. She has been a special resident there ever since.

When news spread in Shalom that Cynthia Dam and Dave Marchand had decided to get married in the nursing home chapel so that Cynthia's mother could attend, residents and nursing staff were ecstatic.

Peter Dam, Eileen's husband, says he doesn't know how much Eileen understood about what was happening. But his daughters had noticed that their mother had displayed some emotion during the ceremony. It had been a very happy service with standing room almost exhausted, reports Peter. Rev. Peter De Bruyne officiated.

"The focus was on the bride and groom, of course, but also on Eileen," he adds. It was a day when the family felt complete once more.

Thinkbit

A child in the womb is a little like the kingdom of God ... it's here but not yet.

John Pater, Edmonton

News Digest

Edited by Irene Bom

Wash those hands

NEW YORK — Washing their hands can help your children avoid getting and transmitting colds, but how much time should they spend washing them? As long as it takes to say the alphabet, says Steven Shelov, editor in chief of *Caring for your Baby and Young Child: Birth to Age Five.*

Shelov also says the proper way to sneeze is into your shoulder, not your hand.

Journalism gets religion

SPOKANE, Wash. (AP) — At Gonzaga University, a local Roman Catholic institution, two journalism professors offer a rare course: religion reporting. Such a course is offered at only a handful of journalism departments in the U.S.

Mike Kirkhorn, the Lutheran director of Gonzaga's journalism program, said religion reporting has generally been neglected in journalism schools and by the news industry.

"It's important to start paying attention to the religious dimension, not with simplistic puffery, but in an informed way," he said. "It affects not just moral and spiritual lives, but the whole gamut of public attitudes and issues."

In Canada, "I can't think of any place that teaches religion reporting," said a spokesperson at Toronto's Ryerson Polytechnic University.

Bill Thorn of Marquette University in Milwaukee started one of the oldest religion journalism courses in 1980.

"Editors have shied away from religion coverage," said Thorn, "but reader surveys show religion is more important to the vast majority of readers than...other fields that get much more coverage. But they want more sensitive and intelligent reporting of it."